NATION

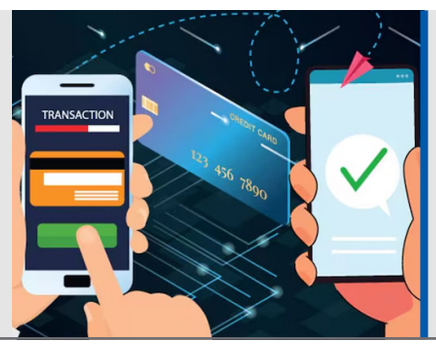
J&K youths protest draconian new job policy

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

India's retail e-payments to double to $7B by 2030

≫ Page: 7 ≪



SPORTS

Uruguay beats Canada 4-3 in shootout

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 15 JULY 2024 | MONDAY | BENGALURU | 8 MUHARRAM, 1446 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 173 | Pages: 8

Ratna Bhandar of Puri's Jagannath temple reopened

PURI, 14 JULY

Ratna Bhandar, the revered treasury of the 12th-century Jagannath temple in Puri, was reopened on Sunday after 46 years for an inventory of valuables and the repair of its structure, officials said. The members of a committee set up by the state government for the purpose entered the temple around 12 pm, and after performing rituals, the treasury was reopened, they said. The reopening of the Ratna Bhandar became a major political issue during the recently held Assembly elections in the state. Targetting BJD over its missing keys, BJP had promised that it would make efforts to reopen the treasury if it won the polls. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Armstrong murder accused shot dead in Tamil Nadu

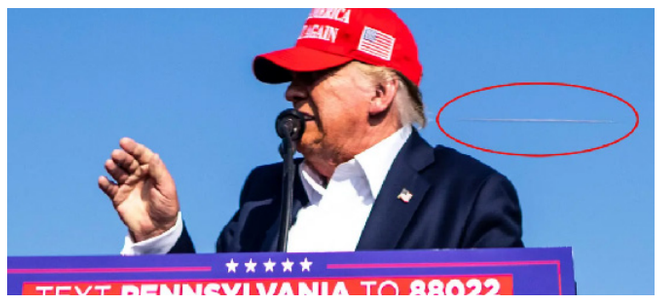
CHENNAI, 14 JULY

A key accused in the murder of BSP Tamil Nadu chief K Armstrong was shot dead on Sunday, police said, adding that he allegedly opened fire at them and attempted to flee from their custody. Several Opposition leaders raised questions about the police's version of events that led to the killing of the murder suspect K Thiruvengadam, and reiterated their demand that the BSP leader's murder be investigated by the CBI. Police released a video clip that purportedly shows the accused persons hacking Armstrong to death on 5 July. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Defiant Trump survives assassination bid at rally

Trump suffers right ear injury; accused among 2 dead



Republican presidential candidate and former US president Donald Trump pumps his fist after the assassination attempt at a campaign event in Butler, Pennsylvania, on Saturday; A photo shows a bullet passing by Trump; The accused is shot dead on top of a roof ***PHOTO: PTI/NYT/ SCREENGRAB***

WASHINGTON, 14 JULY

Former US president Donald Trump survived an attempt on his life when a young gunman fired multiple shots at the former US president at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, injuring his right ear, an incident that could dramatically change the already volatile political scene ahead of the high-stakes presidential election.

Trump, 78, was addressing his supporters at the packed outdoor election rally in Butler town on Saturday when bullets started flying. Video footage showed him grabbing his ear as shots were fired. Trump was seen with blood on his ear and cheek as he was rushed off the stage by Secret Service agents.

The crowd started screaming behind him and then someone yelled "Get down, get down, get down, get down!" as Secret Service agents piled on top of Trump to shield him.

The shooting created chaos with people in the back of the venue immediately running to the exits. As he was being rushed off the stage, a defiant Trump boldly pumped his fist into the air and told the crowd to "fight!" He was then whisked away in a car to a Pittsburgh-area hospital.

"Let me get my shoes," Trump said as he was escorted to the safe place. The shooting, which left one spectator dead and two others critically injured, is being investigated as an attempted assassination. The male attacker was also shot and killed by a member of the Secret Service. A spokesperson for the Trump Campaign said the former president is "fine" after the "heinous act."

The gunman was identified by the FBI as 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks of Bethel Park. He was registered to vote as a Republican.

The suspect fired at Trump from between 200ft and 300ft away on an elevated position with an AR-style assault rifle. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3, 5, 6

> **It is more important than ever that we stand united and show our true character as Americans, remaining strong and determined and not allowing evil to win**
>
> -Donald Trump, Ex-US president

> **Deeply concerned by the attack on my friend, former President Donald Trump. Strongly condemn the incident. Violence has no place in politics and democracies. Wish him speedy recovery**
>
> -Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

CAUVERY ISSUE

Will release 8,000 cusecs water to TN, says Karnataka CM

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said the Karnataka government was ready to release 8,000 cusecs of water from the Cauvery river every day to neighbouring Tamil Nadu instead of one TMC (thousand million cubic feet) as directed by the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee till this month-end.

There is only 63 per cent water in the Cauvery basin dams and in this situation, the State was not in a position to release one TMC water each day, the Chief Minister said.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka, JD(S) MLA GT Deve Gowda, farmer leaders and legal experts attended the meeting.

"Everyone was of the opinion that we should release 8,000 cusecs of water and not one TMC, which is 11,500 cusecs of water. If there is no rain then we will minimise the release of water and file an appeal before the Cauvery Water Management Authority," Siddaramaiah said. According to him, the Cauvery Water Regulatory Authority has directed that starting from 12 July till the month-end, every day one TMC water has to be released.

In a normal year, 9.14 TMC in June and 31.24 TMC in July should be released, he explained. Advocate Mohan Katarki, who was present in the meeting, said this time Krishnarajasagar dam on Cauvery river has only 54 per cent water whereas other dams in the Cauvery basin have only 63 per cent water, Siddaramaiah said. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Former chief minister Sadananda Gowda, Opposition leader R Ashoka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Sunday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

CRPF jawan killed in Manipur militant attack

IMPHAL, 14 JULY

A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan was killed in a gun attack by suspected militants at Mongbung village in Manipur's Jiribam district on Sunday morning, police said. A policeman also suffered injuries he has been admitted to a hospital, they said.

The deceased Ajay Kumar Jha, 43, a resident of Bihar suffered bullet injuries in the head and was declared brought-dead in hospital," a police officer said.

In a post on X, Chief Minister N Biren Singh condemned the attack and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"His supreme sacrifice in the line of duty shall not go in vain. I further extend my sincere condolences to the bereaved family of the deceased soldier, while praying for the speedy recovery of the ones injured during the attack," Singh said. Gunshots were reportedly heard in the village on Saturday night, too, the officer said.

Additional security forces have been deployed at Mongbung from adjacent hill areas following Sunday's attack, another official said.

A vehicle belonging to security personnel has been damaged in the gun attack, he added. *—PTI*

3 terrorists killed in anti-infiltration op in J&K

KUPWARA, 14 JULY

Three terrorists were killed by the Indian Army during the anti-infiltration operation at the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara on Sunday.

The operation at the Keran Sector in Kupwara is still underway, the Army said.

Several weapons and other war-like stores have also been recovered.

"OP DHANUSH II, KERAN #Kupwara 03x Terrorists have been eliminated in the ongoing anti-infiltration operation on the #LoC in Keran Sector, along with the recovery of weapons and other war-like stores. The operation is continuing," Chinar Corps, Indian Army posted on X.

Earlier, the Indian Army informed that it foiled an infiltration bid in Kupwara.

Notably, Jammu and Kashmir have seen a rise in terror attacks lately.

These terror attacks have come during the ongoing Amarnath Yatra in South Kashmir. On 9 June, the very day Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his cabinet were sworn-in, terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi, after which it fell down in the gorge, killing nine.

In another incident, six terrorists were neutralised in separate encounters in the Kulgam district. *—ANI*

CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Newly built four-lane highway from Assam's Tulungia to Jogighopa collapsed after heavy rains. The highway's construction cost is around Rs 636 crore ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

TEENAGER SHOOTS PATIENT AT DELHI HOSPITAL

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

A 32-year-old man was shot dead by a teenager inside a ward of the GTB Hospital here on Sunday, police said. The victim, Riyazuddin, had been admitted to the hospital on 23 June and was undergoing treatment for abdominal infection, according to police.

The incident took place in Ward Number 24 of the hospital, they said. There was one shooter, they added. *—PTI*

ON ALIMONY TO WOMEN

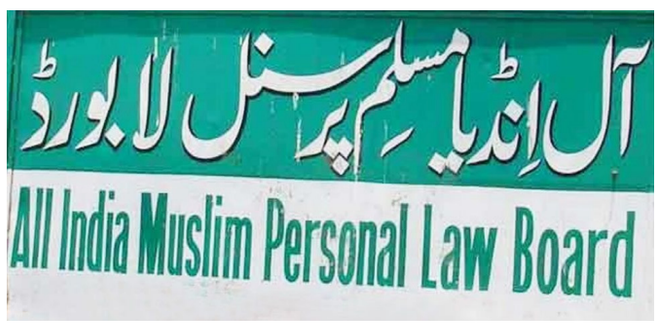
Muslim board to oppose SC verdict

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Sunday said that they will challenge the Supreme Court latest verdict, allowing divorced women to claim maintenance after the period of "Iddat". The board will also challenge the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) law passed in Uttarakhand.

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board held a working committee meeting today in which various issues were discussed. Syed Qasim Rasool Ilyas, spokesperson for the board, stated that in the meeting, they have approved eight resolutions.

"The first resolution was about the recent Supreme Court judgement. This decision conflicts with Sharia law. The resolution states that marriage in Islam is considered a sacred bond. Islam makes every effort to prevent divorce. The Supreme Court's decision claims to be in the interest of women, but from the perspective of marriage, this decision will become problematic for women. If a man has to provide maintenance even after divorce, why would he divorce? And if bitterness has developed in the relationship, who will suffer from it? We will consult with the legal committee to work on how this decision can be rolled back," Ilyas said.

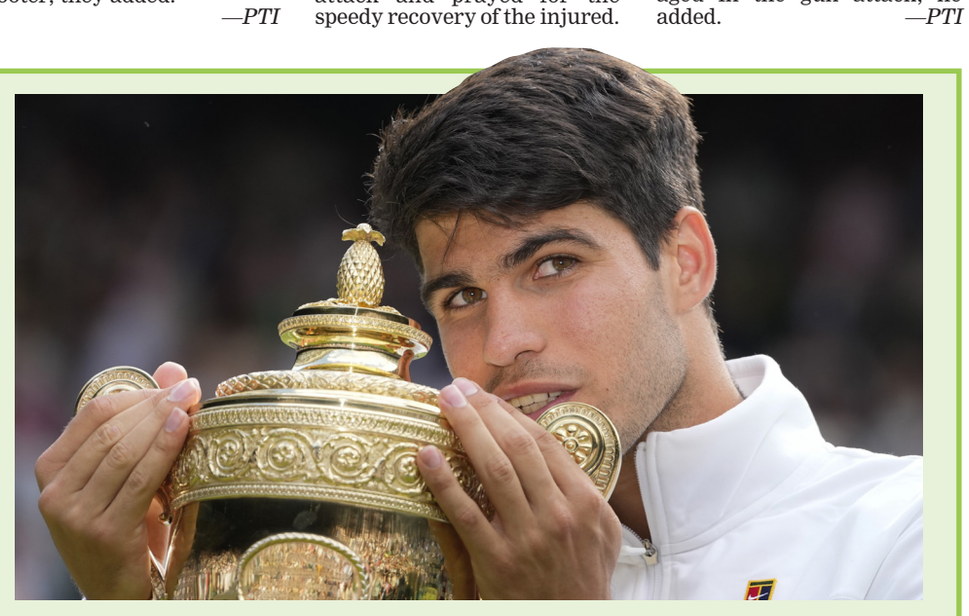


All India Muslim Personal Law Board held a working committee meeting on Sunday in which various issues were discussed ***PHOTO: PTI***

The top court also echoed that time has come for Indian men to recognise the role and sacrifice of 'homemakers' who are strength and backbone of an Indian family and they must provide financial support to her by having having joint accounts and ATMs

Speaking on the UCC, Syed Qasim Ilyas said that their legal committee is working on the process to challenge the UCC law in Uttarakhand. "Diversity is the identity of our country, which our Constitution has preserved. The UCC attempts to end this diversity. The UCC is not only against the Constitution but also against our religious freedom," he added.

He also emphasised on the alleged recent increase in mob lynching cases in the country. *—ANI*



Carlos Alcaraz of Spain holds his trophy after defeating Novak Djokovic of Serbia in the men's singles final at Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI******>>>More on Page 8***

DOMINANT ALCARAZ BEATS DJOKOVIC

Match time: 2 Hours 28 Minutes

5	Aces	8
6	Double faults	4
59	Win % on 1st serve	70
5/14	Break points	1/3
42	Receiving points won	28

C Alcaraz — N Djokovic

Source: Wimbledon

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Youths killed in hit-and-run in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Two young lives were cut short in a fatal hit-and-run accident near Hoskote, Bengaluru Rural, on Sunday. The victims, Siddharth, 17 and Harsha, 18 from Kempapura, were reportedly on their way to a birthday celebration when their car collided with an unidentified vehicle. Details remain uncertain, but according to reports, the friends were travelling on the highway when their car was struck by the unknown vehicle. The impact of the collision caused severe damage to their car. Sadly, both Siddharth and Harsha succumbed to their injuries. In a separate incident, eight people sustained serious injuries in a collision between an auto rickshaw and a tanker on the outskirts of Hubballi. According to the police records the auto driver attempted to overtake the tanker, resulting in a head-on collision. The tanker driver fled the scene, and authorities have registered a case at Hubli Traffic Police Station. — *Salar News*

Woman killed in UP over suspicion of black magic

BALLIA, 14 JULY

A woman was killed here in a clash between two groups after the parents of a girl accused her of performing black magic here to kill their daughter nearly 1,280 km away in Calcutta. Four people, including her two sons, were injured in the clash on Saturday night in the Hadiya Kala village, police said. The police identified the deceased as Raj Muni Devi, 45, they said. Bairia area's Police Circle Officer (CO) Mohammad Usman said that one of the families suspected that Devi used black magic and sorcery to kill their daughter Rupa, 15, in Calcutta on 15 June. Following this, a clash broke out between them and Devi along with four others was injured. They were rushed to a nearby hospital, Usman said. Devi succumbed to her injuries, he said. Based on Devi's son, Santosh's complaint, a case was registered against seven people. Three of the accused were arrested. Further investigation is underway, Usman said. —*PTI*

Illegal fund transfer scam hits Wakf Board

Wakf Board received ₹1.79 cr from Religious Endowment Dept

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

- In a complaint to the High Grounds Police Station, Abbas said that the state government had "encroached" a Wakf property belonging to Gulbarga Dargah and paid Rs 2.29 crore in return

Close on the heels of the Valmiki Corporation scam where a sum of between Rs 88 crore and Rs 187 crore was misappropriated, the Karnataka State Board of Wakfs has lodged a police complaint against its former chief executive officer Zulfiqarulla for illegally moving over Rs 4 crore of its funds.

Incumbent CEO Meer Ahmed Abbas has accused his predecessor of causing a loss of Rs 8.03 crore in total to the state exchequer. In a complaint to the High Grounds Police Station, Abbas said that the state government had "encroached" a Wakf property belonging to Gulbarga Dargah and paid Rs 2.29 crore in return.

Further, the Wakf Board had received Rs 1.79 crore from the Religious Endowment Department (Muzrai department). "This way, Rs 4,00,45,465 was deposited in the Indian Bank account at the Benson Town Branch. On 26 November, 2016, transferred the amount to the Vijaya Bank account of the CEO, Wakf Board in Chintamani branch (in Chikkaballapura district)," the complainant said.

Abbas stated that Zulfiqarulla did not bring this transfer of money to the notice of the Wakf Board, which caused the board a loss of Rs 8.04 crore. This amount is said to have been arrived at by assuming that compound interest would have accrued on the sum of Rs 4,00,45,465 in the past eight years if it had been invested appropriately.

The complaint filed in the Waqf board scam comes close on the heels of a similar scam being brought to light recently, wherein funds were misappropriated from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation. Police have arrested former minister B Nagendra in the Valmiki Corporation scam, along with 11 other persons. —*PTI*

ST Corp scam, MUDA scam may rock legislature session

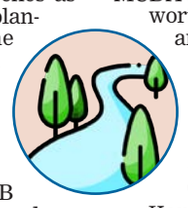
Ex-MUDA chairman Rajeev HV with others during a press meet at KPCC office in Bengaluru on Sunday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Alleged financial irregularities in ST Corporation and the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam.

water sharing issue are likely to rock the monsoon session of the Karnataka Assembly, which starts from Monday.

The Assembly is expected to witness some noisy scenes as the Opposition BJP is planning to raise the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation scam worth Rs 187 crore and theMUDA scam



Congress MLA B Nagendra, who resigned his position as the Tribal Welfare Minister, has been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate while search is on for the Valmiki Corporation chairman and MLA Basavaraj Daddal.

The scam came to light after the Accounts Superintendent of the Corporation Chandrasekharan P died by suicide on 26 May.

The Congress government thereafter constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT), which has so far arrested 11 people in connection with the case. Opposition BJP and JD(S) have demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who also holds the finance portfolio over the issue.

It has also claimed that the MUDA alternative site scam is worth over Rs 3,000 crore and sought a CBI probe, which the state government has dismissed.

The session is likely to see passage of two bills pending before the legislature.

They are The Karnataka CoOperative Societies (Amendment)Bill, 2024 and The KarnatakaSouhardaSahakari(Amendment) Bill,2024.

There are at least two bills cleared by the scrutiny committee, which may be presented during the session. They are The Karnataka IrrigationBill, 2024 and The Karnataka Goods AndServices Tax(Amendment) Bill, 2024. —*PTI*

CM directs ministers to be prepared

Bengaluru, 14 July

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday directed Ministers and senior officials to come prepared for the nine-day legislative session, which begins on 15 July. The Chief Minister held the pre-session meeting with key officials ahead of the Assembly session where he emphasised on the importance of ministers being well-prepared to address departmental issues and to attend the session in person, a statement issued by the CMO said. During the meeting at the Home Office Krishna, Siddaramaiah gathered details from department secretaries on possible discussion topics and instructed them to compile relevant supportive data, the statement read. —*PTI*

IMD issues red alert for rains in K'taka, M'rashtra, Goa

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued severe weather alerts for Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, and the Konkan region, forecasting intense rainfall from Sunday to Tuesday. This monsoon surge is expected to bring substantial downpours, prompting red alerts in several districts of Karnataka, particularly in the Malnad region.

IMD's warnings indicate that the districts of Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, and Chikkamagaluru are likely to experience heavy rainfall until 17 July. A yellow alert has been issued for northern districts, including Bagalkot, Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Raichur, Yadgir, Koppal, Vijayapur, and Gadag, due to expected heavy rains.

The Malnad region, especially Dharwad, Shivamogga, Kodagu, and Chikkamagaluru, has already witnessed significant rainfall, and will be getting more intense rains for the next few days, leading to a red alert. Authorities have enforced tourist restrictions in Uttara Kannada to prevent accidents near overflowing waterfalls. Heavy rains have also increased flood risks along the Kapila River, with increased inflows into the Harangi Reservoir. IMD has forecast heavy rainfall across various regions.

"The monsoon is shifting downward from today. We are issuing a red alert for coastal Karnataka, Kerala, and Konkan Goa for the coming days," IMD scientist Naresh Kumar told ANI.

—*Salar News/ ANI*

PROPOSAL SUBMITTED

Officials submitted a proposal to the State government to increase the fare by 15 to 20 per cent PHOTO: PTI

Bus fare hike inevitable, says KSRTC Chairman

TUMAKURU, 14 JULY

- Noting that the prices of fuel and auto parts have gone up substantially, the KSRTC chairperson said the fare hike has not been effected since 2019

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation Chairperson SR Srinivas on Sunday said the fare hike in government buses in the State was inevitable.

He said the KSRTC has submitted a proposal to the State government to increase the fare by 15 to 20 per cent.

"We had a board meeting two days ago. We have proposed a hike of 15 per cent to 20 per cent. The rest is up to the discretion of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. If KSRTC is to survive, fare hike is inevitable," Srinivas said.

Noting that the prices of fuel and auto parts have gone up substantially, the KSRTC chairperson said the fare hike has not been effected since 2019.

"The salary revision of the KSRTC employees has not been done since 2020. Hence, increasing the ticket price is necessary."

The KSRTC Chairman also added that the KSRTC has not revised bus ticket fares in the State for the past five years and there is the necessity of the fare hike to facilitate salary and benefits revisions for KSRTC employees.

According to him, the corporation has incurred a loss of Rs 295 crore in the last three months.

The transport corporation has also submitted a proposal to purchase 40 new Volvo buses to the government.

He added that so far 600 regular buses have been procured.

The KSRTC Chairman assured that the fare hike would not disproportionately burden male passengers. "Under the Shakti Yojana, the government will bear the cost of increased ticket prices for women passengers."

The KSRTC Chairperson said the State government is bearing the expenses of women travelling in the buses.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and DCM DK Shivakumar with Opposition leaders during the meeting at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Sundayn PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

PM becomes most followed world leader on X

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Setting another benchmark, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become the world's most followed leader in office, on the social media platform 'X' with over 100 million followers.

While comparing the followers of various Indian politicians on X, PM Modi stands out significantly in terms of numbers.

The Leader of Opposition (LoP), Rahul Gandhi has 26.4 million followers, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has 27.5 million, Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav has 19.9 million, and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee has 7.4 million.

PM Modi even has more followers when compared to some active global athletes including Virat Kohli (64.1 million), Brazilian footballer Neymar Jr (63.6 million) and American basketball player LeBron James (52.9 million) followers. He is ahead of celebrities like Taylor Swift (95.3 million), Lady Gaga (83.1 million), and Kim Kardashian (75.2 million). His influence extends to YouTube and Instagram as well, where he has nearly 25 million subscribers and over 91 million followers respectively.

Since joining the platform in 2009, PM Modi has consistently used it for constructive engagement. —*ANI*

SOCIAL GATHERING

Former UK prime minister Tony Blair and his wife with Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka DK Shivakumar pose for a group photograph at Anant Ambani wedding ceremony in Mumbai on Sunday PHOTO: X/ @DKSHIVAKUMAR

Cauvery: State to appeal against CWRC order

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

The State government, along with all-party members, has decided to appeal against the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's (CWRC) order to release water to Tamil Nadu. At an all-party meeting held at Vidhana Soudha, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said, "We have discussed the CWRC's order with opposition leaders and collectively agreed not to release water to Tamil Nadu for the time being."

CWRC had directed Karnataka to ensure the release of 1 TMC (thousand million cubic feet) of water at Biligundlu daily until 31 July to meet Tamil Nadu's requirements. However, Siddaramaiah said that only 60 TMC of water is available in the State's four reservoirs, stressing that the State government is compelled to prioritise water release for agricultural purposes.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that the State had recorded a total inflow of 41.651 TMC into its reservoirs between 1 June, 2024, and 9 July, 2024. —*Salar News*

Reasons for the appeal

- An expert committee, tabled by the Chief Minister, recommended that Karnataka should release 8,500 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu instead of the 11,500 cusecs mandated by the CWRC.
- Panel identified inaccuracies in the CWRC's calculation of water backlog in Karnataka's reservoirs, noting the significant 28.71 per cent deficit in average inflow from 1 June to 9 July.

AT CHARMADI FALLS

Cops walk off with tourist's clothes for defying ban order

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Karnataka police take the clothes of a group of tourists who ignored caution signs at Charmadi Falls in Mudigere, on Saturday.

The tourists, undeterred by numerous warnings and signs prohibiting entry to the waterfall during the rainy season, ventured into the gushing waters, leaving their clothes on the shore. The Chikmagalur division police, spotting the group climbing off-limits rocks, swiftly removed the unattended clothing and walked away, leaving the bathers pleading for their belongings.

The entire incident was recorded and shared online, quickly going viral. The video shows the tourists, now stranded without clothes, negotiating with the officers. After a stern warning and a lesson in safety, the police eventually returned the clothes.

Officials said tourists ventured into the gushing waters, leaving their clothes nearby PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Since 1 July, several waterfalls across the state have been declared off-limits due to heightened risks. The increased water flow and slippery rocks pose a significant threat to swimmers. Authorities have already restricted access to several other waterfalls in the region, including Alekan Waterfalls in Charmadi Ghat, to mitigate monsoon-related risks.

—*Salar News*

Udupi family finds snake in cauliflower

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

PHOTO: X

In a shocking incident, a family in Udupi's Padubidri, Kapu taluk discovered a baby snake inside a cauliflower stored in their refrigerator.

The incident occurred when a woman from Bengre had stored vegetables in her fridge. As she prepared to cook, she was startled to see a small snake emerge from the cauliflower. Terrified, the family dropped the vegetables and fled. Reptile experts were called in to safely capture and release the snake, which a herpetologist identified as a baby python.

Suresh, a local resident of Kapu, explained that snakes and caterpillars often seek secure locations for hatching during the rainy season, which likely led the snake to the cauliflower. He emphasized the importance of being vigilant when purchasing and handling vegetables during this period.

The monsoon season has brought with it an influx of snakes and other venomous creatures seeking warmth and shelter. With snakes finding refuge in unusual places like car and bike seats, helmets, and shoes, there is an increased need for caution. Residents are advised to thoroughly check their belongings and food items to avoid potentially dangerous encounters with these creatures.

—*Salar News*

BJP to appoint new national president by December

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The tenure of Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) National President, JP Nadda, has come to an end. Although his term was extended until June 2024, he has now been assigned significant responsibilities within the government. As a result, the BJP is now in search of a new president. The BJP aims to appoint a new national president by December this year. The election process for this position will commence on 1 August. According to the BJP party constitution, every member is required to renew their membership every nine years. This year, the membership campaign will require the Prime Minister, the party president, and all party leaders to renew their membership. Notably, Nadda has been appointed Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha. Nadda was elected Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat and holds the Health, Chemicals and Fertilizers portfolio in the Modi 3.0 cabinet, post 2024 Lok Sabha polls. *—ANI*

Shah inaugurates 55 'PM Colleges of Excellence' in MP

INDORE, 14 JULY

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday virtually inaugurated 'Prime Minister's College of Excellence' for all 55 districts in Madhya Pradesh. The main programme was held at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government Arts and Commerce College in Indore, which has been developed as the PM's College of Excellence. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, the state's Higher Education Minister Inder Singh Parmar, among others, were present on the occasion. "These colleges were established with a cost of more than Rs 450 crore" Yadav said. All courses will be offered in these colleges as per the new education policy, and they will impart employment-oriented education, as per officials. *—PTI*

SC to hear KCR's plea on 15 July against power irregularities

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on 15 July, a plea of BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao challenging a Telangana High Court order dismissing his plea to declare as "illegal" the Constitution of a commission to inquire into the alleged irregularities in the power sector during his tenure as the state's chief minister. The plea is listed to be heard by a bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. In his petition, Rao has sought to declare as "illegal" the Telangana government's order constituting the Commission of Inquiry to conduct a judicial inquiry into the correctness and propriety of the decisions taken by his government on procurement of power from Chhattisgarh by Telangana power distribution companies and construction of the Bhadradri Thermal Power Plant at Manuguru and the Yadadri Thermal Plant at Damarcherla by TSGENCO (Telangana State Power Generation Corporation Limited). *—PTI*

3 sadhus held in UP on suspicion of abducting child

MEERUT, 14 JULY

The police on Sunday arrested three men for allegedly beating Sadhus on suspicion of them being child kidnappers, officials said. The police identified the accused as Puneet, Mikki and Sudhanshu, residents of the Lisari Gate area, they said. Superintendent of Police Ayush Vikram Singh said a video went viral on social media in which some people were seen beating three sadhus. That video is said to be from the Prahlad Nagar area. He said that police took cognizance of the video and arrested the accused. During the interrogation, the accused told the police that they thought the sadhus were child kidnappers, Singh said. Further investigation in the matter is underway, Singh added. *—PTI*

ARMSTRONG MURDER CASE ACCUSED SHOT DEAD IN TN

Opposition condemns the encounter and cries foul

CHENNAI, 14 JULY

A key accused in the murder of BSP Tamil Nadu chief K Armstrong was shot dead on Sunday after he attempted to assault police personnel and flee from custody, police said.

When the accused, K Thiruvengadam, was taken by sleuths to a location in north Chennai as part of investigation to unearth weapons concealed in a spot, he assaulted a policeman and tried to escape and he was shot at by a police officer.

Thiruvengadam, in his thirties, is one of the 11 accused arrested in the Armstrong murder case and is a history-sheeter. A couple of days ago, a court here had granted police five-day custody of the accused persons.

The Chennai police suspect the involvement of associates of gangster Arcot Suresh, who was murdered in August last year, in the murder.

In an interview with ANI on Sunday, Asra Garg, Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order), North Chennai, said, "After sustained interrogation, due analysis, and diligence regarding the facts and circumstances of each suspect, we have arrested eight people. We have seized seven blood-stained weapons, one Zomato t-shirt, a Zomato bag, and three bikes that were used in the commission of the offence.

History sheeter Thiruvengadam, who was one of the accused arrested in murder of BSP state leader K Armstrong, was killed in police encounter in Madhavaram, on Sunday *PHOTO: X/@SRIKKANTH_7*

> **If you have weapon in your hand then you won't have your life**
> -A Arun, Chennai Police Commissioner

> **Extra judicial encounter killing is not good policing. This is contract killing in uniform**
> -Karti Chidambaram, TN Cong leader

"Highlighting the suspected motive behind the killing, ACP Garg mentioned that the associates of gangster Arcot Suresh, who was assassinated last year, believed it was "conspired" by Armstrong."

Chennai police formed special teams to comprehensively probe the case.

> **The fact that a man who surrendered tried to escape has raised serious suspicions**
> -K Annamalai, TN BJP chief

On 5 July, Armstrong was hacked to death here by a gang and the murder led to outrage and Opposition parties alleged complete deterioration of law and order. *—PTI/ANI*

TRUMP'S ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Such acts must be condemned, says Opposition

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

PHOTO: PTI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday expressed deep concern over the apparent assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump, and said such acts must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

Trump was injured after being shot in the ear during the apparent assassination attempt at an election rally in Pennsylvania after which a male attacker was shot and killed by a member of the Secret Service.

"I am deeply concerned by the assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump. Such acts must be condemned in the strongest possible terms," Gandhi said in a post on X.

The former Congress president wished Trump a swift and complete recovery.

Meanwhile, in a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, "Deeply appalled by the attack on former US President Donald Trump. I strongly condemn this heinous act."

"Such violence has no place in any Democracy and civilised society. As India stands with the American people, we offer our deepest condolences to the family of the deceased," the Congress chief said.

Trump, 78, was hit by a bullet in the upper part of his right ear when the suspected shooter fired multiple shots toward the stage from an elevated position outside of the rally venue in Butler on Saturday, the US Secret Service said.

The attacker killed one spectator at the rally, and two others were critically injured. *—PTI*

'Traitors' will be punished, says Patole on cross-voting in polls

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole has said "traitors" from the party who cross-voted in the recent elections to 11 legislative council seats have been identified and will be punished.

The same "traitors" had ensured the defeat of Congress leader Chandrakant Handore in the council elections two years ago, Patole claimed on Saturday.

"A trap was laid this time and they have been identified. They will be punished so that no one dares to betray the party again," Patole told reporters without taking any name.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut, while talking to reporters on Sunday, said the Congress has accepted that cross-voting took place and they will take action accordingly.

Following a split in the Shiv Sena and NCP, the Shiv Sena (UBT) headed by Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) had moved court seeking disqualification of MLAs of the parties led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar.

Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) faced a setback as a candidate backed by Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) lost. At least seven Congress MLAs defied the party's directive while voting, results showed.

Congress, which has 37 MLAs, had fixed a quota of 30 first preference votes for its candidate Pradyna Satav, and seven remaining votes were to go to Milind Narvekar, candidate of the ally Shiv Sena (UBT), party sources earlier said.

Eventually, Satav got 25 and Narvekar 22 first preference votes, which meant at least seven Congress MLAs cross-voted. *—PTI*

MEET AND GREET

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde meets Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu at his residence to dicuss the current political scenario, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari with party leaders during a protest against the alleged violence, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

Real voters couldn't vote in WB bypolls: Suvendu

KOLKATA, 14 JULY

Senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari on Sunday alleged that the ruling Trinamool Congress did not allow thousands of genuine voters to exercise their franchise in the recently held by-elections to four assembly seats in West Bengal.

The TMC won all four assembly seats in West Bengal where by-polls were held on 10 July.

Adhikari, and other BJP leaders such as Tapas Roy and Rudranil Ghosh participated in the protest outside the Raj Bhavan along with 300 saffron party workers alleged post-poll clashes in the state, said he would bring 100 such voters to the Governor's House.

The Calcutta High Court had allowed the BJP to stage a dharna outside the Raj Bhavan for four hours following a plea by Adhikari. The saffron party leader cited an instance that Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee had staged a similar protest at the same spot on 5 October last year. *—PTI*

Motivated by ideology, BRS MLAs join Cong: T'gana CM

HYDERABAD, 14 JULY

BRS Legislators are joining the ruling Congress as they want to be part of the development of Telangana that the present regime is aiming for, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said on Sunday.

Addressing a gathering at the distribution of safety kits (Katamayya Rakshna Kavacham) for toddy-tappers near here, Reddy said the MLAs are supporting the Congress government after BRS and BJP openly allegedly threatened that the dispensation will fall soon. *—PTI*

Gaurav Gogoi to be Cong's deputy leader in Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

PHOTO: PTI

Congresses' Gaurav Gogoi will be the party's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha and a letter about the decision has been sent to Speaker Om Birla.

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi has written to Lok Sabha Speaker Birla informing him about the appointment of the deputy leader, chief whip, and two whips for the Congress party in the Lok Sabha, AICC General Secretary organization, K C Venugopal said on X. "While Gogoi will be the party's deputy leader in the Lower House, eight-time MP from Kerala, Kodikunnil Suresh will be the party's chief whip."

Earlier, the party had named Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition who was subsequently appointed to the post. "Guided by LoP Rahul Gandhi ji, the Congress and INDIA parties will energetically champion the people's causes in the Lok Sabha," Venugopal said. *—PTI*

CM KEJRIWAL'S HEALTH CONDITION WORRYING: AAP

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Aam Aadmi Party on Sunday alleged that there was an "acute" danger to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's health in judicial custody.

Addressing a press conference here, Delhi cabinet minister Atishi said Kejriwal, who is a severe diabetic, has had his sugar levels falling dangerously low.

"BJP has conspired to put Kejriwal in jail in a fake case. There is an acute danger to his health. His weight has declined by 8.5 kgs and his sugar levels have fallen below 50 five times in sleep. This is a worrying situation especially for a diabetic," she said.

"If Kejriwal suffers a stroke, if there is brain damage and permanent damage, who will be responsible," she said, claiming the AAP chief is unable to get proper medical attention as he is in jail.

When the minister was asked whether they would approach court over the matter, she said they are consulting their lawyers and doctors over the issue. *—PTI*

RAGA OFTEN ENCOURAGES VIOLENCE AGAINST PM: BJP

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

BJP on Sunday accused Rahul Gandhi of encouraging violence against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as it targeted the Leader of Opposition following the assassination attempt on former US president Donald Trump.

These are insincere words, BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya said of Gandhi's condemnation of the attack on Trump.

Malviya, who posted some past comments of the Congress leader, added that Gandhi has used similar rhetoric against Modi, such as calling him a "dictator" that Trump's critics like Democrat leader and US President Joe Biden have.

Following the assassination attempt, many of Trump's supporters have alleged that his demonisation by his rivals has created an atmosphere of hate against him.

Malviya said Trump's critics have made the argument that democracy is in danger from him, and likened this to India's opposition's "Constitution is in danger" pitch against Modi. *—PTI*

MHA WARNS

Be aware of fake emails from govt offices

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

MHA asks users to check if the email has originated from an authentic government website that ends with 'gov.in' *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

On receiving a suspicious e-notice from a government office on the email, people should check the Internet to authenticate the name of the official named in it and call the mentioned department, Union home ministry's cybercrime unit said on Sunday.

Users should be aware of "fake emails" sent in the garb of a government e-notice, said the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) in a public advertisement.

This could be a con that can make people "a victim of cyber fraud", the ad cautioned.

The I4C suggested counter-measures before clicking or responding to such emails: check if the email has originated from an authentic government website that ends with "gov.in"; c heck the internet for information regarding officials named in the email; and call the mentioned department to verify the email received.

Early this month, Union finance ministry had issued a public advisory a lerting email users about fraudulent e-mails bearing names, signatures, stamps and logos of Delhi Police Cyber Crime and Economic Offence, Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB), Intelligence Bureau and Cyber Cell of Delhi.

A letter attached to these emails, as per the advisory issued on July 4, made allegations of child pornography, pedophilia, cyber pornography, sexually explicit exhibit etc. against the receivers of the said e-mails.

Several officers in the national capital's Central Secretariat received such suspicious emails last week which were falsely stated to have been issued by a person working at "MEA Messaging Team NIC High Commission of India." *—PTI*

Overconfidence hurt BJP's hopes in LS polls: UP CM

LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

In the first major meeting of Uttar Pradesh BJP unit after Lok Sabha poll debacle in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said "overconfidence" has hurt BJP's hopes in this year's elections.

Addressing BJP's UP working committee meeting, Adityanath said while BJP managed managed to maintain its vote share of previous elections, there was a "shifting of votes", and now the "defeated" opposition is "jumping around" again.

He said, "Under the leadership of PM Modi, we had maintained constant pressure on the opposition in UP, achieving great success in 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2022 (national and state elections)."

"The percentage of votes that BJP had in its favour in 2014 and subsequent elections, BJP has been successful in getting the same number of votes in 2024 as well," he said.

Adityanath's remarks comes after a day after BJP-led NDA's dismal performance in by-elections in seven states.

In a boost to the INDIA bloc, its members won the bypolls to 10 of the 13 assembly constituencies in seven states, while the BJP managed to bag two and an Independent pocketed one as votes were counted on Saturday.

The Election Commission is yet to announce the schedule for the assembly bypolls in BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

5 associates of Canada-based terrorist Landa held

CHANDIGARH, 14 JULY

Five associates of Canada-based terrorist Lakhbir Singh alias Landa have been arrested, the Punjab Police chief said on Sunday. Three pistols were seized from them, Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said. With this, the number of Landa gang members arrested has increased to 13, the DGP said. "The gang is involved in multiple heinous crimes such as murder, extortion and many other criminal activities in many districts of Punjab," Yadav said. On 10 June, police said they had arrested three associates of Landa. Five more associates of the terrorist were held on 30 June. *—PTI*

4 children drown during mother's suicide bid in MP

MANDSAUR, 14 JULY

Four children drowned after their mother jumped into a well with them in an attempt to commit suicide in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district on Sunday, police said. The incident occurred in Pipalkheda village in Garoth, about 100 km from the district headquarters, in the early hours of the day, an official said. Locals managed to rescue Sugna Bai, 40, from the water body but could not save her children in time, he said. Bodies of Arvind, 11, Anusha, 9, Bittu, 6, and Kartik, 3 were fished out of the well later, Additional Superintendent of Police Hemlata Kuril told reporters. A preliminary probe has revealed that Sugna's husband, Rodu Singh, thrashed her on Saturday evening, following which she left home with her children and took refuge at a nearby school and at 6 am the woman jumped into the well with the children, she said. *—PTI*

Eight-year-old girl mauled to death by leopard in Bijnor

BIJNOR, 14 JULY

An eight-year-old girl was mauled to death by a leopard in a forest area here, an official said on Sunday. Naib Tehsildar of Dhampur Vivek Tiwari on Sunday said Sunita of Mandori village had gone to the forest with her eight-year-old daughter Divyanshi to cut grass along with other women on Saturday evening. Divyanshi was playing when a leopard attacked her. The other women raised a hue and cry that frightened the animal and it fled, leaving the girl injured, Tiwari said. The girl was taken to a community health centre where doctors declared her dead, the official said. *—PTI*

PhD scholar held from Hyderabad for duping man of ₹20L

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

A PhD scholar has been arrested from Hyderabad for allegedly cheating a Delhi-based man of around Rs 20 lakh by luring him into earning more money by completing online tasks, officials on Sunday said. The accused, Lakku Akhileshwar Reddy, is a resident of Telangana who is pursuing a PhD in Business Management and runs a flex printing business, police said. "A complaint was received at the National Cyber Crime Reporting (NCRP) portal where Akshay Kumar Singh, a resident of Dwarka in Delhi, stated that on November 23 last year, he received a message on the online messaging app Telegram about a part-time job," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said. According to the complaint, the accused asked Singh to create an account on a website for buying and selling cryptocurrency and some prepaid tasks were assigned to him. *—PTI*

J&K youths protest draconian new job policy

Government's decision of 40 per cent positions for open merit triggers outrage in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, 14 JULY

The decision to allocate only 40 per cent of positions for open merit in government job recruitments in Jammu and Kashmir has triggered widespread outrage among the youth in the Union Territory.

The move, which comes after accounting for reserved quotas, has led to Opposition in various districts of the erstwhile state. Contrary to past trends of supporting terrorism or separatism, the youth in the Kashmir Valley and parts of Jammu have taken to the streets demanding meritocracy in government job placements.

The youth in the Kashmir Valley and parts of Jammu have taken to the streets demanding meritocracy in government job placements *PHOTO: PTI*

This shift towards advocating for equity in opportunities reflects a new wave of sentiment among today's youth. Often news hungry people, who would look for articles about youngsters joining terrorist organisations or mysteriously disappearing to join ranks of Pakistan-supported groups, come across a different trend these days where the youth wants equity in government jobs.

Though some youths are still joining terror groups, the number is lower. Often this is also not reported out of fear of tough action by the Jammu and Kashmir administration. While concerns persist about some potentially joining terrorist organisations, there is a noticeable trend where youngsters are pushing for fairness in the allocation of government job positions.

The discontent among the youth underscores a growing need for policy reforms that address the aspirations of all candidates and uphold the principles of equal opportunity.

Be it NEET, NET, CUET or for that matter UPSC and JKSSB, the exams are a constant point of discussion at mushrooming coffee shops in the Valley where youths are expressing their disappointment over the ever reducing percentage of seats for the general category.

While political parties agree in private that open merit candidates have an unfair deal, none have come out and openly supported them as this would cost them votes from the reserved categories.

PDP leader Waheen Para in May posted on X that the new reservation policy undermined the merit and aspirations of countless intelligent students and eroded meritocracy. He had also appealed to the government for reconsidering the policy so that a balance is struck for all stakeholders to have equitable opportunities. *—PTI*

J&K youth jumps in river, body found in Pakistan

JAMMU, 14 JULY

PHOTO: PTI

The body of a youth who ended his life allegedly by jumping into the Chenab river here last month was recovered in Pakistan, following which his family sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention to bring back the mortal remains for last rites.

Harash Nagotra, a resident of a border village in the Akhnoor sector, went missing on June 11 and his motorcycle was recovered on the banks of the river.

A police official said a missing report was registered by Nagotra's family the next day. Preliminary investigation suggested that he might have ended his life by jumping into the river after suffering a loss of over Rs 80,000 in an online gaming application, the official said.

The family got the confirmation about Nagotra's death through a WhatsApp message from a Pakistani official after the parents reactivated a SIM card of their son who worked in a private telecommunication company. *—PTI*

25 years of Kargil war: IAF recalls 'Op Safed Sagar'

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The IAF on Sunday recalled the force's contribution in the Kargil war 25 years ago during which it flew thousands of strike missions and helicopters sorties to bolster the Army's efforts in fighting against the adversary.

To commemorate the silver jubilee of the victory in the 1999 Kargil war, the Indian Air Force is celebrating 'Kargil Vijay Diwas Rajat Jayanti' at Air Force Station Sarsawa from 12-26 July, honouring the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice for the nation, the ministry of defence said in a statement.

On Saturday, IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari laid a wreath at the Station War Memorial as a tribute to all air warriors who laid down their lives in service of the nation. He felicitated and interacted with many next of kin during the event.

An air show was organised that included display by Akash Ganga Team and aerial displays by Jaguar, Su-30 MKI and Rafale aircrafts *PHOTO: X/@IAF*

A spectacular air show was organised that included display by the Akash Ganga Team and aerial displays by Jaguar, Su-30 MKI and Rafale fighter aircraft. A 'Missing Man' formation was flown by Mi-17 V5 in memory of the fallen heroes. A static display of IAF helicopters such as Mi-17 V5, Cheetah, Chinook was also organised along with performances by the Air Warrior Drill Team and the Air Force Band, it said.

The event was witnessed by over 5,000 spectators, including school children, local residents of Saharanpur area, veterans, civil dignitaries and personnel of defence forces establishments from Roorkee, Dehradun and Ambala.

"Overall, IAF flew around 5,000 strike missions, 350 reconnaissance/ ELINT missions, and around 800 escort flights. The IAF also flew over 2,000 helicopter sorties towards casualty evacuations and air transport operations," the ministry said. *—PTI*

Worker cleaning Kerala canal swept away

T'PURAM, 14 JULY

A temporary sanitation worker was swept away on Saturday morning while cleaning the Amayizhanchan canal in the heart of the state capital, police said.

Marayamuttom resident Joy, along with two other workers, was engaged in cleaning the Thampanoor part of the canal when the water flow increased due to heavy rainfall. Joy was swept away while he was under a 200-metre-long canal tunnel which runs under the tracks at the railway station. The temporary workers, including Joy, were employed by a contractor who had bagged the contract from the Railways to clean the part of the canal that falls within its territory.

Fire department officials, police, city corporation workers and others are at the site, where efforts were on even at midnight to clear the accumulated plastic waste, they said.

The officials said the canal was filled with plastic and hard waste and the rains were hampering the rescue operation.

Scuba team conducts a search and rescue operation inside the Amayizhanjan canal in Thiruvananthapuram *PHOTO: PTI*

Earlier in the day, authorities removed loads of waste from the entrance of the tunnel to facilitate the entry of scuba divers. The divers, however, could not go beyond 40 metres, the officials said.

Minister V Sivankutty, along with Mayor Arya Rajendran, visited the accident site..

Sivankutty said the corporation and the government were ready to clean the tunnel, but the Railway refused to allow it. *—PTI*

Hindus, Muslims must work together, says Amartya Sen

KOLKATA, 14 JULY

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen said India has the tradition of Hindus and Muslims working and living together in cohesion. Sen, a noted economist, was speaking at a programme at the Alipore Jail Museum on Saturday to foster book-reading habits among underprivileged youth.

"Going by the history of our country, Hindus and Muslims have been working together in harmony in perfect coordination and synergy for ages. This is 'Juktosadhana' as underscored by Kshitimohan Sen in his book. We need to stress on this idea of 'Juktosadhana' in our present times," he said. Cautioning against any attempt to subvert the pluralistic character of India, he said Mumtaj's son Dara Shikoh was one of the few who had translated the Upanishads into Farsi.

"While one school of opinion is against the Taj Mahal looking so beautiful and having so much grandeur, there is another school which wants the name of the monument changed so that it is not associated with a Muslim ruler," he said.

There are greater goals in life than winning the Nobel Prize. At least, there ought to be. Or so, feels Nobel laureate thinker who dubbed the award as a "nice thing to have", but opined that his life wouldn't have been wasted even without it. Sen received the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel in 1998 for his contributions to welfare economics and social choice theory alongside his interest in the problems faced by the poor. *—PTI*

MANIPUR POLICE SEIZE ARMS, AMMUNITION

IMPHAL, 14 JULY

Manipur police have seized arms and ammunition from Imphal East and West districts, an official statement said.

One AK 56 rifle, one SLR, one locally made SLR, one .38 pistol, four 9mm pistol, one .32 pistol, two hand grenades, and 25 round of ammunition were seized by security forces during search operations and area domination conducted in Heingang Ching in Imphal East district on Saturday, the statement issued by Manipur Police said.

Police during an operation at Khuyathong and Nagamapal area of Imphal West district seized one excalibur rifle, 7.62mm Ar (GHAATAK) and one MA-3, MK-II rifle with ammunition on Friday, it said. *—PTI*

RAIN FURY CONTINUES

A school child enjoy the rainfall in Mumbai *PHOTO: PTI*

NDRF personnel conduct a search operation after a young man was swept away, in Haldwani, Uttarakhand on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

Rain likely to dip in Mumbai

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Heavy showers lashed the city and suburbs over the last 24 hours but the rain intensity is likely to reduce here on Sunday, as per the weather department.

The India Meteorological Department has issued a 'red' alert for Kolhapur, Satara, Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri districts in Maharashtra, predicting very heavy rainfall on Sunday. In the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Sunday, the Colaba observatory in south Mumbai recorded 92 mm rainfall, while the Santacruz observatory recorded 142 mm rain, as per the IMD data. NDRF personnel conduct a search operation after a young man was swept away, in Uttarakhand. *—PTI*

Meghalaya revises state climate action plan

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

With its ample green cover threatened by climate change, Meghalaya is focusing on its dedicated climate budget and an ambitious forest conservation scheme as it revises the state action plan to combat global warming, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma has said.

Meghalaya is among a few states in India to earmark as much as 16 per cent – Rs 4,501 crore – of the total state budget for sustainability and conservation initiatives in 2024-25; up from Rs 2,456 crore in 2022-23 and Rs 3,412 crore in 2023-24.

"We feel that climate change affects every aspect of life and governance. And hence it is important for not just my government but also for all governments to focus on climate change for a better future," Sangma, who is here on a visit, told PTI.

That approach is helping shape the revision of the State Action Plan for Climate Change with new climate adaptation targets and sectoral climate risk mitigation strategies. According to the India State of Forest Report report of 2021, Meghalaya has 76 per cent of its land under total forest cover. *—PTI*

Heavy rains lash several districts in Rajasthan

JAIPUR, 14 JULY

Heavy rains lashed many places of Jaipur, Jhalawar and Bharatpur districts in Rajasthan in the last 24 hours, the meteorological department here said on Sunday. Gangadhar was the wettest recording 87 mm rainfall. According to MeT, several places in Jaipur, Jhalawar and Bharatpur districts, also witnessed light to moderate showers. *—PTI*

Flood situation in Assam recedes, toll hits 107

GUWAHATI, 14 JULY

The flood situation in Assam continued to improve on Sunday as water level is receding fast across the state, officials said. Meanwhile, a report by Assam State Disaster Management Authority on Saturday night said that one person died at Gogamukh revenue circle of Dhemaji district. The total number of people losing their lives has increased to 107. *—PTI*

PURI'S JAGANNATH TEMPLE

Ratna Bhandar reopenes after 46 years

PURI, 14 JULY

Ratna Bhandar, the revered treasury of the 12th-century Jagannath temple in Puri, was reopened on Sunday after 46 years for an inventory of valuables and the repair of its structure, officials said.

The members of a committee set up by the state government for the purpose entered the temple around 12 pm, and after performing rituals, the treasury was reopened, they said. The reopening of the Ratna Bhandar became a major political issue during the recently held Assembly elections in the state. Targetting the then-ruling BJD over its missing keys, BJP had promised that it would make efforts to reopen the treasury if it won the polls.

Among the 11 people present when the treasury was reopened were former Orissa HC judge Biswanath Rath, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Arabinda Padhee, ASI Superintendent DB Gadanayak and a representative of Puri's titular king 'Gajapati Maharaja', officials said.

Devotees during the reopening of Ratna Bhandar at the Jagannath Temple, in Puri, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

- The ornaments and other valuables kept in the inner and outer chambers of the treasury would be moved to a temporary strong room in wooden chests

Also among them were four servitors, Patjoshi Mohapatra, Bhandar Mekap, Chadhaukarana and Deulikaran, who took care of the rituals, they said. Though the treasury was reopened, the inventory of valuables will not be carried out immediately, Padhee said before entering the temple.

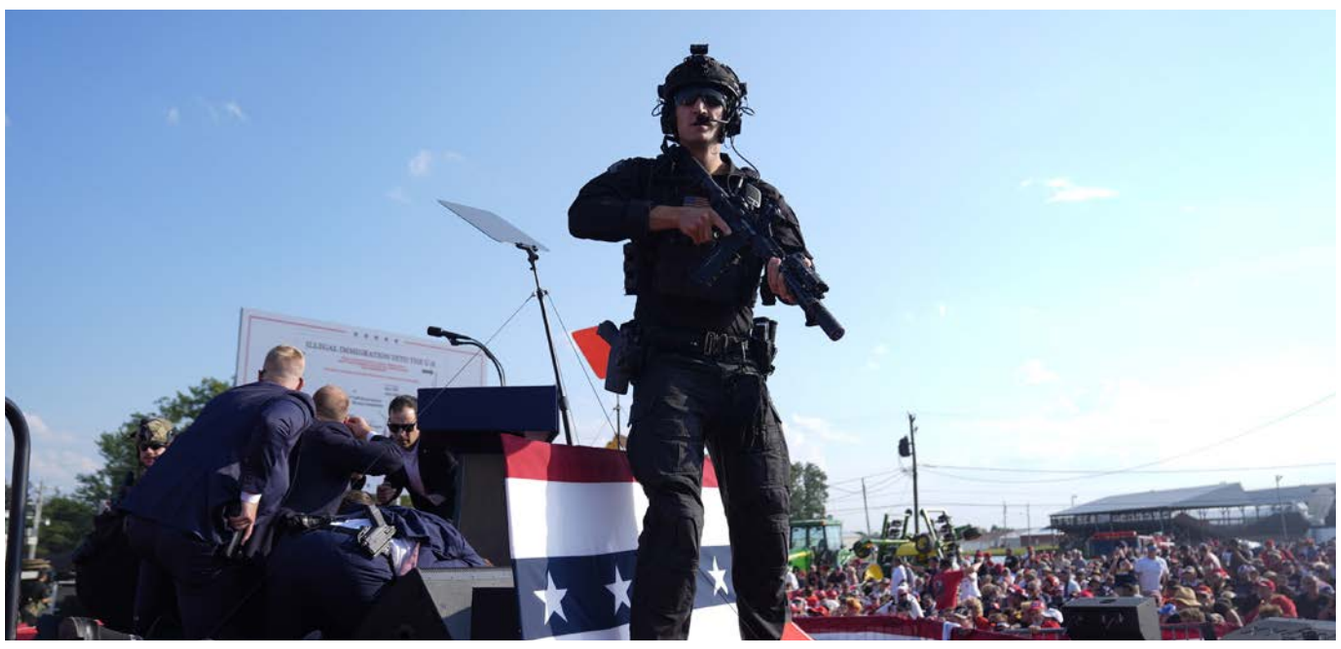
The ornaments and other valuables kept in the inner and outer chambers of the treasury would be moved to a temporary strong room in wooden chests, he said. The temporary strong room has been identified and all required arrangements, including installation of CCTV cameras, have been ensured, he said.

The treasury was last opened in 1978. In the morning, Justice Rath and Padhee offered prayers before Lord Jagannath and his siblings at the Gundicha temple for the smooth completion of the works. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been formulated for the entire process, Padhee said. *—PTI*

BHARAT IN PARIS EVENT

Participants during an 'Olympic Awareness Run' as part of Bharat In Paris event, at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, in New Delhi, on Sunday
PHOTO: PTI

Spray of bullets shatters US illusion of security



Illusion of security and safety in American politics has been dramatically shattered after ex- Prez candidate's assassination attempt ***PHOTO: PTI***

A spray of bullets may have only grazed Donald Trump in Pennsylvania on Saturday night, but they killed two and critically wounded two others.

They have also torn through the 2024 presidential campaign, damaging the social and cultural fabric of the nation. The illusion of security and safety in American politics – built over decades - has been dramatically shattered.

Trump received only minor injuries but it was close - a photograph by Doug Mills of the New York Times appears to show the streak of a bullet cutting through the air near the former president's head.

Not since Ronald Reagan was shot by John Hinkley Jr in 1981 has there been such a dramatic act of violence directed against a president - or presidential candidate.

It harkens back to a darker time in US history, more than a half-century ago, when two Kennedy brothers – one a president and one a presidential candidate - were felled by assassin bullets. Civil rights leaders such as Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X all also lost their lives in political violence.

Like today, the 1960s were marred by intense political polarisation and dysfunction, when a firearm and an individual willing to use it could change the course of history.

It is difficult to predict the impact Saturday's events will have on America - and its political discourse. Already, there have been some bipartisan calls for a cooling of rhetoric and national unity.

Within hours of the incident, President Joe Biden – Trump's likely opponent in November – appeared before cameras in Delaware to make a statement to the press.

"There is no place in America for this kind of violence. It's sick," he said. "We cannot be like this. We cannot condone this."

The president later spoke by phone with the former president. He cut short his weekend at the beach and is returning to the White House late Saturday evening.

But the violence has also quickly filtered into the bare-knuckle partisan trench-warfare that has characterised American politics in recent decades.

Some Republican politicians have laid the blame for the attack on Democrats who have employed dire rhetoric about the threat they say the former president poses to American democracy.

Chris LaCivita, the Trump campaign manager, said that "leftist activists, Democratic donors and even Joe Biden" need to be held accountable at the ballot box in November for "disgusting remarks" that in his view led to Saturday's attack.

Democrats may object, but many on the left used similar language to describe the culpability of right-wing rhetoric in the months before the 2011 near-fatal shooting of Congresswoman Gabby Giffords in Arizona.

The Pennsylvania violence will undoubtedly cast a long shadow over the Republican convention, which begins on Monday. Security protocols will be tightened, and the protests – and counter-protests – near the site could be accompanied by a new sense of foreboding.

Meanwhile, an even brighter national spotlight will shine on the party's nominee when he takes the stage on Thursday night.

Images of the former president, bloodied, with an upraised fist are sure to become a rallying point in Milwaukee.

The Republican Party was already planning to make strength and rugged masculinity a central theme, and Saturday's incident will give that a jolt of new energy.

The US Secret Service will also face intense scrutiny for its handling of security at the Trump rally. An individual with a high-powered rifle was able to come within firing distance of a major presidential candidate.

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson is promising that his chamber will conduct a full inquiry. Those investigations will take time.

But for now, one thing is clear: in a year of uncharted electoral waters, America's politics have taken a new, deadly turn. *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

Climate change causing deadly lightning strikes

Black Increased heating due to climate change is leading to more thunderstorm activity and consequently, more lightning strikes worldwide, senior scientists said on Saturday.

At least 43 people were killed due to lightning strikes in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday and 21 in Bihar on Friday.

Most of the people killed were either transplanting paddy in fields, grazing cattle or taking shelter under trees to protect themselves from the rain.

Former Secretary in the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, Madhavan Nair Rajeevan, said climate change is increasing the formation of convective or thunderstorm clouds.

"People have documented that the frequency of thunderstorms is increasing everywhere, including India, due to climate change," he told PTI.

"Unfortunately, we do not have long-term data for lightning flashes to confirm an increase in incidents. However, we can conclude that global warming leads to more convective activity, resulting in more thunderstorms and, consequently, more lightning strikes," he said.

Rajeevan explained that lightning is attributed to deeper clouds with large vertical extensions.

"With climate change increasing the moisture-holding capacity of the air, more such clouds are forming," he added.

According to the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, lightning incidents in India increased by 30 to 40 per cent between 1995 and 2014.

National Crime Records Bureau's (NCRB) Crimes in India Report 2022 said lightning accounted for 2,887 of the 8,060 deaths caused by forces of nature.

Data from the India Meteorological Department shows six per cent of the districts and four per cent of the population are moderately to highly vulnerable to lightning strikes. Odisha ranks as the most vulnerable state.

D S Pai, a senior scientist at the IMD, said the higher the surface temperature, the lighter the air and the higher it will rise.

"So, with higher temperatures, there is a greater chance of convective activity or thunderstorms, which naturally leads to more lightning strikes. Climate change is making such events more frequent," he told PTI.

The senior meteorologist pointed out that the large number of lightning strikes in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh that claimed several lives last week were also due to large-scale thunderstorm activity.

According to the Annual Lightning Report 2023-2024 by the Climate Resilient Observing Systems Promotion Council (CROPC) and the IMD, the highest cloud-to-ground (CG) lightning strikes occur in eastern and central India, and hence these regions face the maximum damage.

The report released in June also identifies lightning hotspots along the Kaimur and Satpura ranges between the Ganga and Son rivers in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.

Some states, such as Bihar, have been demanding that lightning be officially recognised as a natural disaster, which would make victims or their families eligible for compensation from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

Former IMD chief K J Ramesh explained that the vertical extent of clouds increases with more heating.

"Crystallisation occurs when the air temperature reaches the freezing point at the height of five to six kilometres. The deeper the cloud, the more ice crystals and charge it contains," he said.

Ramesh said an increase of one degree Celsius in temperature results in a seven per cent increase in the moisture-holding capacity of the air and a 12 per cent increase in lightning strikes.

The senior meteorologist noted that while adequate warnings are being issued through the Damini mobile application, social media, and public platforms, including radio and television, a lot of work remains to be done in creating awareness among people.

During the day, when people are out in the open engaging in outdoor activities, they can clearly see the dark clouds approaching.

They have enough time to seek safe shelter, such as a sturdy home, a solid building, or a hard-top vehicle with the windows rolled up, he said. *—PTI*

Data from India Meteorological Department shows 6 per cent of the districts and 4 per cent of the population are moderately to highly vulnerable to lightning strikes ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

Glacier exploitation threatens Pakistan's ecological future

Pakistan boasts over 7,000 glaciers, forming the largest mass of ice outside the polar regions ***PHOTO: ANI***

The illegal cutting and commercial exploitation of glaciers in regions like Dir, Chitral, Swat, Shangla, Kaghan, Naran, and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa pose a grave threat to the ecological and climatic stability of the province. These activities flagrantly violate environmental protection statutes and regulations governing KP, Dawn reported.

Pakistan boasts over 7,000 glaciers, forming the largest mass of ice outside the polar regions. Northern Pakistan, crisscrossed by the Karakoram, Himalayan, and Hindu Kush mountain ranges, is a landscape shaped by ice and rock. These glaciers are vital for local communities, providing crucial irrigation and sustaining life in the north. Local inhabitants have developed intricate canal systems to harness glacier meltwater for agriculture.

However, climate change has profoundly impacted Pakistan, causing temperatures to soar and snow to melt rapidly, resulting in devastating floods that frequently destroy villages and claim lives. Like alpine regions worldwide, Pakistan's glaciers are receding at an alarming rate.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is home to approximately 3,050 glaciers, primarily in its northern reaches.

These glaciers are indispensable for the region's water resources and ecological balance. Shockingly, certain individuals and entities are illicitly extracting and transporting glacier ice for commercial gain, cutting glaciers into large blocks. This exploitation rapidly depletes these critical natural resources.

Local reports indicate that during recent years, particularly during Ramazan, 200 to 300 mini-trucks loaded with ice blocks were daily transported from Upper Dir to other parts of Dir, Bajaur, Malakand, and even Mardan Districts. Sadly, much of the local population remains unaware of the glaciers' vital role in their area's ecological system, as reported by Dawn.

Despite Pakistan's obligations under international environmental laws, there is a glaring absence of specific legislation addressing glacier protection at both national and provincial levels.

The Environmental Protection Act of 1997, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Act of 2014, and the Climate Change Act of 2017 do not mention glaciers, highlighting a critical legal void given their pivotal role in the region's ecological and climatic stability.

In 2010, Argentina set a global precedent by passing the world's first national glacier protection law, which bans mining, industrial activities, and other harmful practices near glaciers. In January 2024, Tajikistan followed suit with its own glacier protection legislation.

The unauthorised cutting of glaciers flagrantly violates existing environmental protection laws and regulations in KP. These actions demand immediate investigation and the enforcement of appropriate legal penalties against the perpetrators. Glacier depletion disrupts fragile ecological balances, adversely affecting local flora and fauna.

The loss of glaciers undermines biodiversity preservation efforts and threatens endangered species in these regions. Glaciers also play a critical role in global climate regulation by reflecting solar radiation and maintaining temperature balance. Their reduction accelerates global warming and climate change, with severe repercussions for weather patterns, agriculture, and human health.

These glaciers serve as vital freshwater reservoirs. Their degradation will significantly reduce water availability for local communities, agriculture, and wildlife, jeopardising food security and livelihoods.

The natural beauty and pristine environments of these regions attract a substantial tourist influx, contributing significantly to the local economy. Glacier destruction threatens tourism revenues, causing economic losses for communities dependent on this sector.

Pakistan, a signatory to the Paris Agreement and numerous international climate and environmental protection treaties, is obligated to safeguard its glacier reserves. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement, mandates greenhouse gas reduction efforts crucial for mitigating glacier melt and preservation.

Article 2 of the Paris Agreement aims to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius, with efforts to cap the increase at 1.5°C, critical targets for curbing glacier melt rates. The Convention on Biological Diversity advocates for conserving biological diversity and sustainable use of its components, emphasising in-situ conservation like protecting glacier ecosystems to maintain species viability, as reported by Dawn.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification addresses land degradation, including safeguarding water sources and glaciers crucial for regional hydrological stability. Articles 10 and 11 of the UNCCD emphasise national action plans to combat desertification and promote sustainable land management practices.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, encompassing 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underscores glacier protection under SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land), which aim to combat climate change, preserve terrestrial ecosystems, and halt biodiversity loss.

Both KP and federal governments bear a responsibility to enact legislation safeguarding glaciers and must act promptly to fulfill this obligation, Dawn reported. *—PTI*

Trump shooter was a registered Republican

20-year-old suspected shooter Thomas Matthew Crooks was a 'star award' winner in college

WASHINGTON DC, 14 JULY

Thomas Matthew Crooks, the gunman who authorities say attempted to assassinate former president Donald Trump was a 20-year-old registered Republican who would have voted for the first time in the presidential election in November.

He lived in the Pittsburgh suburb of Bethel Park, about 56km south of the Trump rally site where law enforcement officials said he fired at Trump, the presumptive presidential candidate of the Republican Party.

Crooks was shot dead by the Secret Service personnel on Saturday, soon after he fired a volley of shots at Trump from an "elevated position outside of the rally venue."

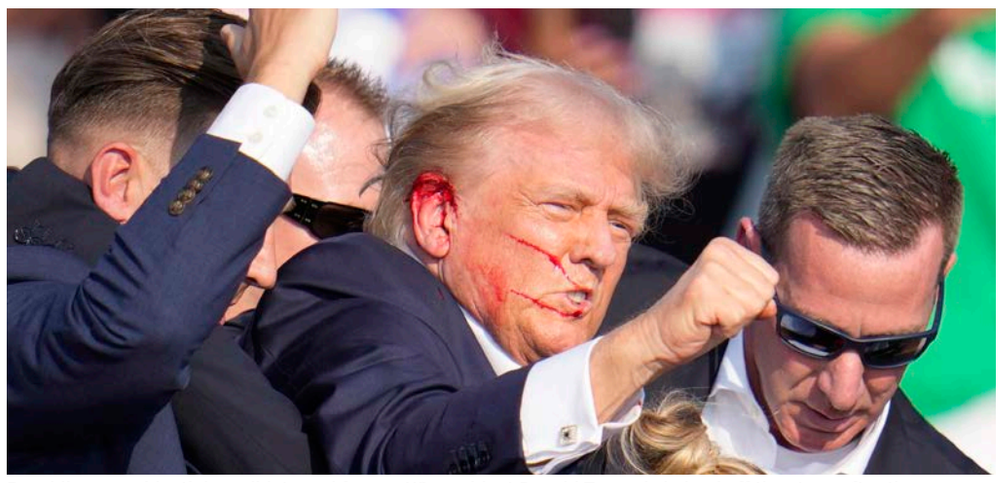
He had previously made a small contribution to a Democratic-aligned group, CNN reported, quoting public records.

He graduated from Bethel Park High School in 2022, according to a local media report and a video of the school's commencement.

He received a USD 500 "star award" that year from the National Math and Science Initiative. This year's presidential election would have been the first he was old enough to vote in, CNN said. A US citizen who turned 18 years old on or before Election Day (5 November, 2024) is eligible to vote.

Crooks did not have any identification on his body, so agents had to "run his DNA and get biometric confirmation," Kevin Rojek, the special agent in charge of the FBI's Pittsburgh field office, said at a press conference.

—AP



Republican presidential candidate and former US president Donald Trump is helped off the stage after the assassination attempt at a campaign event in Butler, Pennsylvania, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

WORLD REACTS

I'm sickened by the shooting at former President Trump. It cannot be overstated -- political violence is never acceptable. My thoughts are with former President Trump, those at the event, and all Americans.

JUSTIN TRUDEAU,
Canadian Prime Minister

I am appalled by the shocking scenes at President Trump's rally, and we send him and his family our best wishes. Political violence in any form has no place in our societies, and my thoughts are with all the victims of this attack."

KEIR STARMER,
UK Prime Minister

I am appalled to learn about the shooting of former US President Donald Trump at his rally in Pennsylvania. Such violence has no justification and no place anywhere in the world. Never should violence prevail.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY,
Ukrainian President

The incident at former President Trump's campaign event in Pennsylvania today is concerning and confronting. There is no place for violence in the democratic process.

ANTHONY ALBANESE,
Australian Prime Minister

We do not believe that the attempt to eliminate and assassinate Trump was organised by the current authorities. But the atmosphere around candidate Trump...provoked what America is confronting today

DMITRY PESKOV,
Kremlin Spokesperson

No place in America for violence, says Biden

WASHINGTON, 14 JULY

US President Joe Biden and former presidents Barack Obama, George W Bush and Bill Clinton condemned the assassination attempt saying there is no place for violence in America.

Biden said: "Look, there is no place in America for this kind of violence. It's sick. It's sick. It's one of the reasons why we have to unite this country. We cannot allow this to be happening. We cannot condone this," Biden told reporters at his Rehoboth Beach house in Delaware.

Obama condemned the attack and wished quick recovery to Trump.

"There is absolutely no place for political violence in our democracy. Although we don't yet know exactly what happened, we should all be relieved that former President Trump wasn't seriously hurt, and use this moment to recommit ourselves to civility and respect in our politics. Michelle and I are wishing him a quick recovery," Obama said.

Clinton said: "Violence has no place in America, especially in our political process. Hillary and I are thankful that President Trump is safe, heartbroken for all those affected by the attack at today's rally in Pennsylvania, and grateful for the swift action of the US Secret Service." *—AP*

Indian Americans call assassination bid a dark chapter

CHICAGO, 14 JULY

The assassination attempt on former US president Donald Trump is "a dark chapter" in American democratic history, Indian Americans from across the country said, as they condemned this heinous attack on the presumptive Republican presidential candidate.

"Today we learned about the attempted assassination of (former) President Trump. This is very sad, and this is not the kind of violence that is expected in a democracy," eminent Indian-American community leader Dr Bharat Barai said.

"People have differences of opinion. People have different political views. People have different economic views, and of course, those have to be expressed by the ballot box," Barai said.

This kind of extreme hate where somebody thinks that it is appropriate to kill a political opponent is totally condemnable, he said.

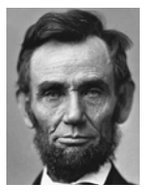
"It's a dark chapter in American democracy," Jesdip Singh Jassee, chairman of Sikh Americans for Trump, said. Violence should never occur in our democracy, he said.

—AP

PAST 4 ASSASSINATIONS IN THE US

Here are some of the assassinations that took place since the nation's founding in 1776

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
16th president (Age: 56)
Died: 15 April, 1865



● Lincoln was the first president to be assassinated, shot by John Wilkes Booth on as he and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, attended a special performance of the comedy "Our American Cousin" in Washington. His support for Black rights has been cited as a motive behind his killing.

JAMES GARFIELD
20th president (Age: 49)
Died: September 19, 1881

● Garfield was the second president to be assassinated, six months after taking office. He was walking through a train station in Washington on 2 July 1881 to catch a train to New England when he was shot by Charles Guiteau. He was found guilty and executed in June 1882.

WILLIAM McKINLEY
25th president (Age: 58)
Died: 14 September, 1901

● McKinley was shot after giving a speech in Buffalo, New York on 6 September 1901. He was shaking hands with people passing through a receiving line when a man fired two shots into his chest at point-blank range. McKinley died on 14 September 1901, six months after opening his second term.

JOHN F KENNEDY
35th president (Age: 46)
Died: 22 November, 1963

● Kennedy was fatally shot by a hidden assassin armed with a high-powered rifle as he visited Dallas in 22 November 1963 with first lady Jacqueline Kennedy. He was rushed to Parkland Memorial Hospital, where he died soon after. He was the youngest person elected president.

FBI to lead investigation in Trump rally shooting

WASHINGTON DC, 14 JULY

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is leading the investigation into the shooting incident at former US President Donald Trump's rally in Pennsylvania's Butler on Saturday (local time).

In a statement, the FBI said that the special agents of the FBI Pittsburgh Field Office responded immediately and will include crisis response team members and evidence response technicians.

The FBI stated that they will continue to support this probe with all the resources of the investigation agency. It also asked people to inform them if they had any information regarding the incident.

On X, the FBI stated, "The FBI has assumed the role of the lead federal law enforcement agency in the investigation of the incident involving former President Donald Trump that occurred earlier today in Butler, Pennsylvania."

"Special agents of the FBI Pittsburgh Field Office responded immediately, to include crisis response team members and evidence response technicians.

We will continue to support this investigation, alongside our partners at the US Secret Service and state local law enforcement. Anyone with information is asked to call our tip line at 1-800-CALL-FBI," it added. *—ANI*

Pakistan flour mills group postpones nationwide strike

ISLAMABAD, 14 JULY

The Pakistan Flour Mills group has decided to postpone its strike after sources suggest that the deadlock between the group and the government has come to an end, reported ARY News on Saturday. Asim Raza, Chairman of the Pakistan Flour Mills Association, announced that the strike had been postponed after the government committee reached a deal with the association. The Chairman of the FBR and four federal ministers held a critical meeting with members from the Flour Mills Association. During the discussions held, the group expressed concerns about the implementation of the withholding tax, as per ARY News. ARY News reported that FBR Chairman has agreed to examine abolishing the withholding tax on flour mills. As a result, the Association has agreed to the suggestion to postpone the strike. *—ANI*

China to unveil new reforms to halt eco slowdown

BEIJING, 14 JULY

China's ruling Communist Party headed by President Xi Jinping will begin its four-day key economic review meeting on Monday to finalise a new set of economic reforms to revitalise the country's economy hamstrung by the persistent slowdown that has sparked concerns at home and abroad. The meeting called the third Plenum to be attended by 376 full and alternate members of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee will meet from Monday to Thursday to primarily examine issues related to comprehensively deepening reforms and advancing Chinese modernisation, according to an official announcement earlier. The meeting aroused global attention as the world's second-largest economy worth USD 18 trillion was unable to shake off its slowdown mode, especially after the Covid-19 lockdowns. *—PTI*

Oli returns as Nepal PM for the third time

KATHMANDU, 14 JULY

KP Sharma Oli, a wily politician who has wrecked many governments in Nepal in the past and endangered ties with India during his first tenure, has a tough task ahead as the new prime minister amidst frequent political turmoil.

Almost on predictable lines, the Oli-led Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), which is the largest party in the ruling coalition, withdrew support from the government led by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' last week.

Oli, 72, ditched his one-time friend Prachanda to join hands with his foe-turned-friend Sher Bahadur Deuba, leading the largest party in the House of Representatives, the Nepali Congress for the remaining 40 months of Parliament. President Ramchandra Paudel on Sunday appointed CPN-UML Chairman Oli as the prime minister of Nepal. *—PTI*

KP Sharma Oli **PHOTO: PTI**

Israeli strike kills 90 in Gaza's safe zone, says Hamas

GAZA, 14 JULY

The Hamas-run Health Ministry in Gaza says at least 90 Palestinians have been killed in an Israeli air strike on Muwasi, an Israeli-designated safe zone that stretches from northern Rafah to Khan Younis.

About 300 people have been injured, according to the health ministry's statement, in an attack which Israel says targeted senior Hamas leader Mohammed Deif and his deputy Rafa Salama.

In a news conference on Saturday evening, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said there was "no certainty" that either of them had been killed. The strike hit the al-Mawasi area near Khan Younis, which the Israeli military has designated as a humanitarian zone.

An eyewitness in al-Mawasi said that the site of the strike looked like an "earthquake" had hit. Videos from the area show smouldering wreckage and bloodied casualties being loaded on to stretchers.

— BBC News

Palestinians retrieve a body from a site hit by an Israeli bombardment on Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

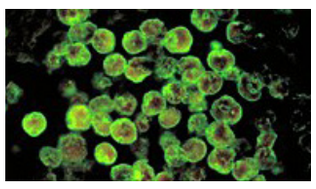


PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Brain-eating amoeba claims life of Pakistan youth

ISLAMABAD, 14 JULY

In a rare occurrence, a 22-year-old man died of primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) in Pakistan's Karachi, taking the tally of casualties to three this year, ARY News reported.

PAM is notably a disease of the central nervous system caused by Naegleria fowleri commonly called 'brain-eating' amoeba.

The victim was identified as Aurangzeb. He contracted the disease following a picnic with his friends at a farmhouse in Quaidabad on 7 July, where the group had also gone for a swim. The next day, Aurangzeb started showing symptoms, which included nausea and fever.

The 22-year-old Aurangzeb was the third victim of the deadly infection this year in the city, with the other two cases reported in Korangi and Malir earlier, according to ARY News.

—ANI

North Korea hints at more trash balloons

SEOUL, 14 JULY

The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed Sunday to respond to what she called a fresh South Korean civilian leafleting campaign, signalling North Korea would soon resume flying trash-carrying balloons across the border.

Since late May, North Korea has floated numerous balloons carrying waste paper, scraps of cloth, cigarette butts and even manure toward South Korea on a series of late-night launch events, saying they were a tit-for-tat action against South Korean activists scattering political leaflets via their own balloons. No hazardous materials have been found. South Korea responded by suspending a 2018 tension-reduction deal with North Korea and resumed live-fire drills at border areas.

In a statement carried by state media, Kim Yo Jong said that "dirty leaflets and things of (the South Korean) scum" were found again in border and other areas in North Korea on Sunday morning.

"Despite the repeated warnings of (North Korea), the (South Korean) scum are not stopping this crude and dirty play," she said. "We have fully introduced our countermeasure in such situation. The (South Korean) clans will be tired from suffering a bitter embarrassment and must be ready for paying a very high price for their dirty play," Kim Yo Jong said. *—AP*

Tough road ahead for Imran Khan despite judicial relief

ISLAMABAD, 14 JULY

Despite back-to-back judicial relief to beleaguered Imran Khan, his woes are far from over and Pakistan's former prime minister remains in jail with his wife Bushra Bibi. A district and session court on Saturday overturned the conviction of 71-year-old Khan and his wife Bushra, 49, in the un-Islamic marriage case related to the violation of the mandatory waiting period for a Muslim woman between two marriages.

Meanwhile, A court in Pakistan on Sunday handed over jailed former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to the country's anti-corruption officials on an eight-day remand for probe in a fresh case of alleged corruption. *—PTI*

IN ITALY

2 Indians held for enslaving 33 workers

ROME, 14 JULY

Two Indian nationals have been arrested for allegedly enslaving 33 farm labourers, all from India, in Italy's Verona province, according to a media report, weeks after the country was shocked by the tragic death of a Sikh farm worker who bled to death.

Finance police also seized assets worth 475,000 euros from the suspects, who own two agricultural sector companies with no employees on the books and are allegedly total tax evaders, ANSA news agency reported on Saturday.

The two alleged gangmasters were arrested on Saturday and are under investigation for crimes, including enslavement and labour exploitation, the Italian news agency said.

● Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said last month that Singh, one of thousands of Indian immigrants who work the fields in the country, was the victim of "inhuman acts"

The issue of modern forms of slavery in Italy recently came to the fore of media attention following the case of 31-year-old Sikh farm labourer Satnam Singh, who bled to death after being abandoned by his employer after a strawberry wrapping machine severed his arm in Lazio, near Rome, last month. Singh, who was an Indian national, died due to "copious bleeding".On 26 June, India asked Italy to take prompt action against those responsible for Singh's death.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said last month that Singh, one of thousands of Indian immigrants who work the fields in the country, was the victim of "inhuman acts".

"These are inhumane acts that do not belong to the Italian people. I hope that this barbarity will be punished harshly," she said following a Cabinet meeting.

Gangmastering and the often violent exploitation of migrant farm labourers is a chronic problem in Italy, especially in the south of the country. *—AP*

Dismembered bodies found at Kenya dump

NAIROBI, 14 JULY

Police in Kenya say they found five bags filled with the dismembered remains of a number of women at a rubbish dump in the capital Nairobi on Saturday.

Detectives have been scouring the site in the Mukuru slum since Friday, when the corpses of six other women were found in sacks floating in a sea of rubbish.

Officers said the bags recovered on Saturday included severed legs and two torsos, speculating that the deaths could be related to the activities of cultists or serial killers.

But the country's police watchdog said on Friday that it was investigating whether there was any police involvement in the gruesome deaths, which come amid allegations of widespread human rights abuses by officers during recent anti-government protests.

Human rights groups have accused police of shooting dozens of people who were demonstrating against planned tax rises, some of them fatally, and abducting or arbitrarily arresting hundreds more.

Officers from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) urged people to keep calm and grant them space to investigate the discoveries, accusing protestors of impeding their investigation.

—AP

PHOTO: PTI

India-Korea FTA review meeting to begin from 17 July

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

With talks to upgrade the existing India-Korea free trade agreement (FTA) moving forward, senior officials of both countries will hold the next round of negotiations from Wednesday in Seoul, an official said. The agreement, dubbed as comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA), was operationalised in January 2010. So far, 10 rounds of review talks have been concluded. The Indian team "will visit Seoul from 17-19 July for the next round of review meetings. The two countries have sought greater market access for certain products, which are under the negative list of the agreement. The Department of Commerce has engaged with different ministries, including heavy industries, steel, chemicals, to prepare offer list. *—PTI*

IndianOil launches high-speed racing fuel STORM-X

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

India's top oil firm IndianOil has started producing fuel used in adrenaline-pumping motor racing and dispatched its maiden consignment. The firm's refinery at Paradip in Odisha has started producing STORM-X - a high-octane petrol specifically formulated for racing cars, the firm said in a statement. Indian Oil. The launch of premium racing fuel for top-end motor racing events across the country and in the international circuit is part of the firm's pursuit of innovation and excellence, the statement said. IOC has partnered with Madras Motor Sports Club to supply STORM-X for the 3rd and 4th rounds of the Indian National Racing Championship at Madras International Circuit in the 2024 season. *—PTI*

PC Jeweller to raise ₹2,705 cr via warrants

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

PC Jeweller Ltd plans to raise up to Rs 2,705 crore by issuing warrants on a preferential basis to promoters and investors, mainly to settle bank loans and for working capital requirements. Promoters will infuse around Rs 850 crore into the company by subscribing to warrants issued by the company. In a regulatory filing on Saturday, PC Jeweller informed that its board has approved the proposal to raise funds up to Rs 2,705.14 crore by preferential issue of fully convertible warrants. According to the filing, the board approved the issuance and allotment of up to 48,13,42,500 fully convertible warrants to 'promoter Group" and 'non' promoter, public category'. *—PTI*

Automobile exports from India rise 15.5 pc in Q1

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Automobile exports from India rose 15.5 per cent year-on-year in the June quarter with all verticals, barring three-wheelers, recording growth in shipments, according to the latest SIAM data. Overall shipments stood at 11,92,577 units in the first quarter the current fiscal year, as compared with 10,32,449 units in the same period of the last fiscal. Passenger vehicle exports stood at 1,80,483 units in the first quarter, registering a jump of 19 per cent over 1,52,156 units in the same period last year. Maruti Suzuki India led the space with shipments of 69,962 units in the period under review. It exported 62,857 units in the first quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal. Hyundai Motor India exported 42,600 units in the April-June period. It had shipped 35,100 units in the same period last year. *—PTI*

India's retail e-payments to double to $7B by 2030

People use digital payments in 72% of their transactions

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

With digital adoption fast gaining currency, India is likely to see retail digital payments double to USD 7 trillion by 2030 from current levels, a study by Kearney and Amazon Pay said.

In the report 'How Urban India Pays', Kearney-Amazon Pay said strong adoption of digital payments in online purchases has potentially led to a permanent shift in consumer behaviours, fueling offline adoption as well.

While 90 per cent of the respondents of the survey preferred digital payments when making online purchases, affluent consumers lead the way with the highest Degree of Digital Payment Usage (DDPU), tending to use various modes of digital payment for 80 per cent of their transactions.

Research was based on an online survey of 6,000 consumers PHOTO: PTI

"Millennials and Gen X are leading in the adoption of all types of digital payment instruments," it said. "Men and women both use digital payments in about 72 per cent of their transactions, indicating gender parity.

The research was based on an online survey of over 6,000 consumers along with more than 1,000 merchants through offline and online methods across 120 cities with representation from various regions, income groups, city categories, age brackets and genders. India has seen a surge in e-commerce, with the market valued at USD 75 billion to USD 80 billion in 2022 and expected to grow at a 21 per cent czGR until 2030.

Digital payments have penetrated small towns, with respondents in these areas highlighting that 65 per cent of their transactions are digital, while respondents in larger cities cited this ratio to be 75 per cent. Digital modes of payment constitute around 69 per cent of the total transaction volumes for the Indian merchants that were surveyed. Even street vendors such as paan shops, fruit and flower sellers, food stalls, and kirana stores are joining the digital payment brigade. *—PTI*

Mcap of 7 of top-10 firms jumps ₹1.72L cr; TCS in focus

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most valued firms jumped Rs 1,72,225.62 crore last week, with IT bellwether Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) stealing the show, amid a rally in equities.

Last week, BSE benchmark jumped 522.74 points, or 0.65 per cent.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 622 points, or 0.78 per cent, to settle at a record closing level of 80,519.34 on Friday. During the day, it zoomed 996.17 points, or 1.24 per cent, to hit an all-time high of 80,893.51. The market capitalisation (mcap) of TCS surged Rs 62,393.92 crore to Rs 15,14,133.45 crore.

Shares of TCS on Friday surged nearly 7 per cent after the country's largest IT services player reported an 8.7 per cent growth in the June quarter net profit at Rs 12,040 crore.

Shares of TCS surged nearly 7 per cent last week alone PHOTO: PTI

ITC added Rs 31,858.83 crore taking its valuation to Rs 5,73,258.78 crore.

The mcap of Infosys zoomed Rs 26,905.14 crore to Rs 7,10,827.27 crore and that of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) jumped Rs 22,422.12 crore to Rs 6,64,947.01 crore.

Hindustan Unilever's market valuation rallied Rs 17,668.92 crore to Rs 6,16,156.81 crore and that of Reliance Industries soared Rs 9,066.19 crore to Rs 21,60,628.75 crore.

The mcap of Bharti Airtel climbed Rs 1,910.5 crore to Rs 8,15,705.36 crore.

The mcap of State Bank of India diminished Rs 356.99 crore to Rs 7,67,204.26 crore and that of ICICI Bank declined Rs 210.5 crore to Rs 8,67,668.16 crore. *—PTI*

EXPECT INFLATION TO REMAIN CLOSE TO 5%: SBI

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Retail inflation, or the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in India, is expected to remain below or close to 5.0 per cent in the remaining months of 2024-25, except for September, according to SBI Research. India's retail inflation rate increased in June, deviating from the moderation seen in previous months, driven by rising food prices. The year-on-year inflation rate based on the all-India Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 5.08 per cent for June. The corresponding inflation rates for rural and urban areas were 5.66 per cent and 4.39 per cent, respectively. 12 states had inflation rates above India's overall rate of 5.1 per cent in June. Odisha recorded the highest inflation rate at 7.22 per cent, followed by Bihar at 6.37 per cent and Karnataka at 5.98 per cent. Furthermore, with US inflation having declined by 0.1 per cent from May, the report noted. *—ANI*

AHEAD OF BUDGET SESSION

Budget session to begin from 23 July PHOTO: PTI

Govt may introduce insurance laws amendment bill

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The government is likely to introduce a bill seeking amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938, during the upcoming Budget session to achieve 'Insurance for All by 2047'.

Some of the provisions, which could be part of the amendment bill, include composite license, differential capital, reduction in solvency norms, issuing captive license, change in investment regulations, one-time registration for intermediaries and allowing insurers to distribute other financial products, sources said.

The move will enable the entry of differentiated insurance companies like in the banking sector. The banking sector is currently categorised as universal bank, small finance bank, and payments bank.

The provision of composite licenses would allow life insurers to underwrite health insurance or general insurance policies.

As per the provisions of the Insurance Act, 1938, life insurers can only offer life insurance covers, while general insurers can offer non-insurance products like health, motor, fire, marine, etc.

The Irdai does not allow composite licensing for insurance companies, which means that an insurance company cannot offer both life and non-life products as one entity.

The draft bill is ready and it has to go to the Cabinet for its approval, sources said, adding that the finance ministry is hoping that it gets introduced in the upcoming session.

A direct tax practitioners' body on Sunday urged the government to reduce personal income tax burden on citizens in the upcoming Union budget later this month.

All India Federation of Tax Practitioners (AIFTP) president Narayan Jain stated that the exemption limit should be increased to Rs 5 lakh.

—PTI

CONTINUE MSME PAYMENT RULE: SME

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Industry body SME Chamber of India has urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to continue the 45-day MSME payment rule for corporates and other buyers.

According to Section 43B(h) of the Income Tax Act, introduced through the Finance Act 2023, if a larger company does not pay an MSME on time -within 45 days in case of written agreements -- it cannot deduct that expense from its taxable income, leading to potentially higher taxes.

The government in last year's Budget added a new clause under Section 43B of the Income Tax Act to address the challenge of delayed payments faced by MSMEs in the country. *—PTI*

FPIs invest ₹15,352 cr in equities in 2 weeks of July

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Foreign investors infused Rs 15,352 crore into Indian equities during the first half of this month, driven by the government's commitment to ongoing reforms, low US Federal rates, and strong domestic demand.

The upcoming Union Budget will be one of the most watched events by foreign investors to understand the government's plans for economic growth, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research at Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

According to the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of Rs 15,352 crore in equities this month.

This came following an inflow of Rs 26,565 crore in equities in June on the back of political stability and a sharp rebound in markets.

Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

Apart from equities, FPIs invested Rs 8,484 crore in the debt market during the period under review. *—PTI*

FPIs invested Rs 8,484 crore in the debt market PHOTO: PTI

'DON'T FAIL'

Centre warns Jharkhand about auctioning 10 mineral blocks

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The mines ministry has asked Jharkhand government to put on sale 10 mineral blocks, including a gold mine, and warned that if the state failed to do so, the Centre will begin the auction process, sources said.

The blocks are in the G2 (general) and G3 (preliminary) level of exploration, they said.

The ten blocks include one copper mine, one limestone mine, and a graphite mine, the sources added.

As per the amendment in mining rules in 2021, the Centre has the power to put on sale mineral blocks in case a state government fails to auction the mines within the mutually agreed period.

Sources said when it comes to auctioning of mineral blocks, the Jharkhand government is lagging behind other states. Of the 38 geological reports handed over by Geological Survey of India to the Jharkhand government, only five have been utilised for auction so far. The state government had given an assurance to notify 15 blocks for auction by December 2021. However, only four of these blocks have been notified for auction by the state.

Of the remaining 11 mines, one potash block is critical and will be auctioned by the Centre. The remaining 10 blocks are still to be notified for auction by the state. Twelve mineral blocks have been successfully auctioned so far in the current financial year. All the blocks auctioned are in Rajasthan.

The blocks have been bagged by companies such as Ambuja Cements Ltd and J K Cement Ltd. *—PTI*

The blocks have been bagged by companies such as Ambuja Cements Ltd and JK Cement Ltd PHOTO: PTI

TRADING ACTIVITY TO HINGE ON Q1 MARKET RESULTS

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

As the results season kicks in, the quarterly earnings numbers of several blue-chip firms -- such as Infosys and Reliance Industries -- along with global trends and trading activity of foreign investors, will determine equity market movement in the holiday-shortened week ahead, according to analysts.

The domestic WPI inflation data for June -- scheduled to be announced on Monday -- will also influence trading sentiments, traders said.

Markets will remain closed on Wednesday for Muharram.

Among major quarterly earnings to be tracked this week are from HDFC Life Insurance Company, Bajaj Auto, BPCL, JSW Steel, Asian Paints, Infosys, and Reliance Industries.

Meanwhile, IT services company HCL Tech on Friday posted a 20.4 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,257 crore for the June-ended quarter and gave a revenue growth guidance of 3-5 per cent for FY25 on GenAI diversification. *—PTI*

LOW-CARBON STEEL DEALS

ArcelorMittal shows off Olympics tie-up

PARIS, 14 JULY

ArcelorMittal, the steel major owned by Indian entrepreneur Lakshmi Mittal, is showcasing the various facets of its low-carbon steel partnership with the Olympics and Paralympics, kicking off in Paris later this month.

The Luxembourg-headquartered company revealed this week that its recycled and renewably-produced XCarb is behind the Torches that have been touring the world, the Olympic Rings that now adorn the French capital's iconic Eiffel Tower landmark and the Agitos symbol of the Paralympics atop the city's Arc de Triomphe.

Lakshmi Mittal's firm is part of Paris Olymics this season PHOTO: PTI

The Paris Olympics 2024 is also setting a new milestone by reusing the Torches for the first time, with a significantly reduced carbon footprint with the production of just 2,000 required as opposed to 12,000 in the past.

The company previously tied up with the London 2012 Olympic Games, resulting in the ArcelorMittal Orbit designed by celebrated British Indian artist Anish Kapoor.

The Paris Games, opening on 26 July and running until 11 August, involves the firm providing the steel and manufacturing knowhow for the Torch, designed by French artist Mathieu Lehanneur, and what is collectively referred to as the "Spectaculars" – the Olympic Rings and the Agitos – a project masterminded by engineer Professor Pierre Engel. Paris is busy getting spruced up for a grand opening ceremony when the Torch will make its way down the River Seine to Olympic Cauldron at a closely guarded secret location. *—PTI*

Xiaomi India profit plunges 77% to ₹239 cr

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Chinese smart device maker Xiaomi Technology's profit in India nosedived 77 per cent year-on-year to Rs 238.63 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal, according to a regulatory filing. The company had posted a profit of Rs 1,057.7 crore in the preceding financial year. Xiaomi's revenue from operations declined by about 32 per cent to Rs 26,697 crore in FY23 from about Rs 39,100 crore in FY22.

Xiaomi earned Rs 26,395 crore from the sale of products and Rs 264 crore from the sale of services, which include advertisements and value-added services, among others, during the year under review.

Research analysts differed in their estimate of Xiaomi's smartphone market share in India for the March 2024 quarter.

PHOTO: PTI

Cybermedia research estimates it to be marginally behind Samsung at 18.6 per cent, Counterpoint research projected it at 18.8 per cent, while IDC pegs it to be around 13 per cent.

The company recently completed 10 years of operations in India. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

BCCI to release one crore for Gaikwad

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

TIn a noble gesture, the BCCI on Sunday decided to release Rs one crore for the treatment of former India coach Anshuman Gaikwad, who is battling blood cancer at a medical facility in London. BCCI's decision has come following emotional appeals for support from former captain Kapil Dev and Sandip Patil, who had enjoined the cricket board to help Gaikwad. "Mr. Jay Shah has instructed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to release Rs 1 crore with immediate effect to provide financial assistance to India's veteran cricketer Mr Anshuman Gaekwad, who is battling cancer," BCCI apex council said in a statement. Gaekwad, son of former India captain D K Gaekwad, is undergoing treatment for blood cancer at the King's College Hospital in London. "Shah has also spoken to Mr Gaekwad's family to take stock of the situation and extend support. The board stands by Gaekwad's family in this hour of crisis. —*PTI*

Bharat in Paris Celebrates India's Olympic Spirit

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The 'Bharat in Paris' marathon was flagged off on 14 July, Sunday, to celebrate India's Olympic movement. The marathon also celebrated the International Olympic Committee's recognition of Esports. Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh and Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwary officiated the event. A total of 118 athletes, including ace javelin thrower and Olympic gold-winner Neeraj Chopra will compete in the Paris Olympics, which will begin from 26 July. In another significant development, the IOC and Saudi Arabia will host the inaugural edition of the Olympic Esports Games next year. —*PTI*

Anahat, Shaurya enter 4th round of WJ Squash

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

India's Anahat Singh and Shaurya Bawa entered the fourth round of the World Junior Squash Championships in Houston in the girls' and boys' sections respectively. Reigning women's national champion Anahat defeated Samantha Jaffe of the US 11-7, 12-10, 11-6 in the third round. She will meet Japan's Akari Midorikawa for a place in the quarterfinals. Meanwhile, Bawa rallied to beat USA's Rustin Wiser 4-11, 11-7, 12-10, 11-6 in the third round and will lock horns with Segundo Portabales of Argentina in the pre-quarterfinals.—*PTI*

Fan dies after being shot outside the stadium

MEXICO CITY, 14 JULY

A 24-year-old fan who was shot outside of a stadium in the northern city of Tijuana, Mexico, after a league match between Chivas and Xolos has died in a hospital, authorities confirmed on Saturday. Before the end of the Mexican Apertura second-round match on Friday, a brawl broke out between fans of both teams in the stands of the Caliente stadium in Tijuana. On social media, there are several videos of a fan wearing a black shirt from the local team Xolos fighting inside the stadium and the same man later appears in another image, lying on the ground and bleeding in the parking lot. The Prosecutor's Office of the northwestern state of Baja California, where Tijuana is located, reported in a statement on Saturday that the 24-year-old man was found wounded in access 3 of the stadium and that the attacker had fled. —*PTI*

Alcaraz overpowers Djokovic with straight-set win

Alcaraz defeates Djokovic 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (4) in Wimbledon final

LONDON, 14 JULY

Carlos Alcaraz defeated Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (4) in the Wimbledon men's final here on Sunday to collect his fourth Grand Slam title at the age of 21.

It was a rematch of last year's championship match on the grass of the All England Club, which Alcaraz won in five sets.

This one — played in front of a Centre Court crowd that included Kate, the Princess of Wales, in a rare public appearance since announcing she has cancer — was much easier for Alcaraz, at least until he stumbled while holding three match points as he served for the victory at 5-4 in the third set.

Still, Alcaraz regrouped and eventually picked up a second major trophy in a row after last month's triumph on the clay at the French Open. The Spaniard won his first Slam title at the 2022 US Open as a teenager, and no man ever has collected more Slam hardware before turning 22 than he has.

The 37-year-old Djokovic, wearing a gray sleeve on his surgically repaired right knee, was denied in his bid for an eighth Wimbledon title and record 25th major overall. He tore his meniscus at Roland Garros on June 3 and had an operation in Paris two days later.

- It was a rematch of last year's championship match on the grass of the All England Club, which Alcaraz won in five sets

Less than six weeks later, Djokovic was hardly at his best on Sunday — and Alcaraz certainly had something to do with that. "Especially in the first couple of sets, the level of tennis wasn't really up to par on my side," said Djokovic, whose two children were in his guest box. "He had it all today. I tried to push him. ... It wasn't meant to be."

Alcaraz was up 5-4, 40-love in the third set when the occasion got the better of him. He frittered away his first championship point with a double-fault, beginning a run of five mistakes by him that donated points — and that game — to Djokovic. There was a backhand that went awry. A forehand volley. A forehand. Another forehand. That was the only time all match that Djokovic broke Alcaraz.

Djokovic double-faulted to hand over a two-break, 5-1 lead in the first set. He put a volley into the net to fall behind by a break to begin the second, then double-faulted to end that one. —*AP*

Carlos Alcaraz of Spain reacts after winning a point against Novak Djokovic of Serbia during the men's singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London on Sunday PHOTO:PTI

Carlos Alcaraz of Spain holds his trophy after defeating Novak Djokovic of Serbia in the men's singles final at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Sunday PHOTO:PTI

Kate, Princess of Wales, is at Wimbledon in a rare public appearance since revealing she has cancer PHOTO:WIMBLEDON

Tom Cruise, Benedict Cumberbatch and Julia Roberts enjoying the final match between Carlos Alcaraz and Novac Djokovic PHOTO: WIMBLEDON

India defeat Zimbabwe in 5th T20

HARARE, 14 JULY

Sanju Samson's well-crafted fifty and Mukesh Kumar's disciplined spell helped India wind up their Zimbabwe tour with a comprehensive 42-run victory in the fifth and final T20I here on Sunday.

With this win, India clinched the series 4-1. Samson's (58, 45b) was central to India's healthy 167 for six along with Shivam Dube's flashy 26 (12b).

Then the India bowlers led by Mukesh (4/22), Shivam Dube (2/25) and Washington Sundar (1/7) did their job, bundling out Zimbabwe for 125 in 18.3 overs.

After the early dismissal of Wessly Madhevere, who dragged the third ball of the first over by pacer Mukesh onto his stumps, and Brian Bennett, the pair of Tadiwanashe Marumani (27) and Dion Myers (34) added 44 runs for the third wicket to keep the hosts in the hunt.

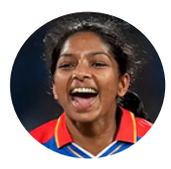
But such shots were few and far between from the Zimbabwe batters.

Mukesh, who bagged his career-best T20 figure, fittingly ended Zimbabwe innings going through the gate of Richard Ngarava.

Earlier, Samson (1x4, 4x6) and Riyan Parag (22, 24b) added 65 runs for the fourth wicket as India recovered from a middling Power Play in which they scored 44 for three.

At 44 for three, India needed a partnership to steady the innings. Samson and Parag provided just that. —*PTI*

Mani to lead India A Women



MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Off-spinner Minnu Mani will lead the India 'A' Women with Shweta Sehrawat as her deputy during the multi-format tour of Australia beginning 7 August. India is scheduled to play three T20s, three 50-over ties, and a four-day clash against Australia 'A' during the upcoming tour.

The squad also consists of Sajana Sajeevan, Uma Chetry, and Saika Ishaque.

Shabnam Shakeel has also been included but her selection is subject to fitness. The 27-year-old fast bowler Saima Thakor has been added to the squad on standby. —*PTI*

Saneeth, Tasnim and Devika in badminton finals

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Karnataka's Saneeth DS and Gujarat's Tasnim Mir notched up comfortable wins over their respective opponents to secure the men's and women's singles titles in the Yonex-Sunrise VV Natu Memorial All India Senior Ranking badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Third seed Saneeth ended the dream run of qualifier Tushar Suveer 21-15, 21-12 in a 44-minute clash between two Karnataka players in the men's final, while Tasnim got the better of Devika, who won the last ranking meet in Bengaluru, 21-16, 21-13.

While the youngsters ruled the singles categories, the experienced Aarthi Sara Sunil showed that she is still a force to reckon with, clinching the women's doubles crown in the company of VS Varshini.

The top seeds came from a game down to beat Karnataka's former national champions Shikha Gautam and Ashwini Bhat K 17-21, 22-20, 21-18 in 53 minutes.

Shikha, however, stood atop the mixed doubles podium as she and Nitin Kumar, seeded second, defeated Dhruv Rawat and Radhika Sharma 15-21, 21-14, 21-17 in the final.

Rawat clinched the men's doubles crown, pairing up with Assam's Suraj Goala. The top seeds defeated Akshan Shetty and Ravikrishna PS 21-15, 22-20 in 40 minutes.

Results:

Men's singles: Saneeth DS bt Tushar Suveer 21-15, 21-12

Women's singles: Tasnim Mir bt Devika Sihag 21-16, 21-13

Men's doubles: Suraj Goala/Dhruv Rawat bt Ravikrishna PS/Akshan Shetty 21-15, 22-20

Women's doubles: Aarthi Sara Sunil/VS Varshini bt Shikha Gautam/Ashwini Bhat K 17-21, 22-20, 21-18

Mixed doubles: Nitin Kumar/Shikha Gautam bt Dhruv Rawat/Radhika Sharma 15-21, 21-14, 21-17. —*PTI*

COPA AMERICA

Uruguay beats Canada 4-3 in shootout

CHARLOTTE, 14 JULY

Luis Suárez still has a knack for big plays. The 37-year-old Suárez, Uruguay's career scoring leader, tied the score two minutes into second-half stoppage time, and Uruguay beat Canada 4-3 on penalty kicks after a 2-2 draw on Saturday night to finish third in the Copa America.

Uruguay goalkeeper Sergio Rochet saved Ismaël Koné's weak penalty kick after the shooter's stutter step on Canada's third attempt, and Alphonso Davies put Canada's fifth and final kick off the crossbar.

Federico Valverde, Rodrigo Bentancur, Giorgian de Arrascaeta, and Suárez converted Uruguay's attempts past goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair while Jonathan David, Moïse Bombito, and Mathieu Choinière made their kicks for Canada, which went first in the shootout.

"Uruguay is one of the three best teams of this tournament and taking into consideration that the tournament included Central, North and South America, and we finished third, allows us to be optimistic," Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa said through an interpreter. But Bielsa wasn't happy with his team's effort and added that he may have misjudged how tired his team was after playing on just two days' rest. "The draw was barely deserved," Bielsa said.

Bielsa praised Suárez's "physical skills and mental aptitude" after the match following his 69th international goal on a quick attack following a centering pass from José María Giménez.

"It is very well known what he has done throughout his career and having shared this time with him, I believe he is a top-notch player and a great teammate," Bielsa said of Suárez. —*PTI*

Uruguay defeated Canada to finish third PHOTO: X / @COPAAMERICA

Lionel Messi looks to lead Argentina

MIAMI GARDENS, 14 JULY

Lionel Messi is one win from leading Argentina to a record 16th Copa America title. Colombia will do everything in its power to make sure that doesn't happen in a matchup that pits the juggernaut against the surging force in the final. It'll happen Sunday night at Hard Rock Stadium, which hosted two group-stage matches and will be the site of seven games during the 2026 World Cup.

GOLF

Aditi rises to T-22nd at Evian Championship

EVIAN BAINS, 14 JULY

Indian golfer Aditi Ashok shot three birdies in the last four holes of the third round as she carded a 4-under 67 and jumped 22 places to tie 22 at the Amundi Evian Championship here.

The Indian, who has played more than 30 Majors, vaulted to 5-under for three rounds as she continues her search for her maiden Top-10 finish in a Major.

Earlier, Diksha Dagar had withdrawn from the event after her first round 76.

Both Aditi and Diksha will play for India at the Olympic Games in Paris.

The 72-hole stroke play competition has a purse of USD 8 million with a winner's share of USD 1.2 million.

Australian Stephanie Kyriacou edged a stroke ahead of Japan's Ayaka Furue and Lauren Coughlin of the United States with a birdie on the final hole.

Randhawa lying tied sixth in Senior Swiss Open, Jeev T-29

India's Jyoti Randhawa stayed in line for a fine Top-10 finish as he signed for a round of 69 to be tied-sixth at the Swiss Senior Open on the Legends Tour of Europe for over 50-year-old golfers.

The 52-year-old, who opened with a 66, is now at 5-under after two rounds.

Randhawa, playing his first season on the Legends, had a steady second round with two birdies and one bogey.

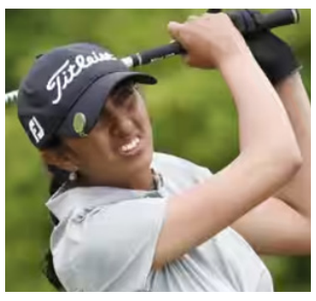
The other Indian in the field, Jeev Milkha Singh dropped to T-29 with a second round of 72 after his first round 68.

He had two birdies, an eagle, four bogeys, and a double bogey.

Sharma trails in T-61st place, as Indian-American Theegala is T-4th in Scotland

India's Shubhankar Sharma shot a modest even-par 70 in the third round to move to tied-61st at the Genesis Scottish Open golf tournament here.

Shubhankar shot six birdies and as many bogeys to be 3-under with one round to go.



Aditi Ashok PHOTO: PTI

A week ahead of the Open at Royal Troon, the Indian has been getting his birdies, but too many dropped shots have pegged him back.

Sweden's Ludvig Aberg took a two-shot lead as he sits at 17-under while local man Robert MacIntyre is breathing down his neck at 15-under. PGA Tour winner Adam Scott (64) was third at 14-under.

Indian-American Sahith Theegala (65-66-66) at 13-under was tied for fourth alongside USA's Collin Morikawa (66), South Korea's Sungjae Im (67), and Frenchman Antoine Rozner (68).

Atwal slips to tied 59th in Kaulig Championship

Arjun Atwal slipped in the third round of the Kaulig Championships on the Champions Tour for Over 50s here at the Firefox Country Club. The Indian veteran, who had rounds of 74-71 on the first two days, added a 73 to go to 8-over and is T-59th. He was tied-47th at the end of the second round.

Anirban Lahiri takes 4-shot lead in Spain

Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri inched closer to a maiden win on the LIV golf series as he carded a 5-under 66 in the second round to take a four-shot lead at the LIV Golf Andalucía here.

Lahiri, who plays on the Crushers team, put himself in position for his first win after the second round that included six birdies and no bogeys in his last 13 holes. The 37-year-old, who opened with a 2-under 69, is 7-under with 18 holes to go. New Zealand's Danny Lee is his closest pursuer at 3-under. —*PTI*

China to go for sweep in diving gold at Paris

MEXICO CITY , 14 JULY

Chinese divers won seven of eight gold medals at the last Olympics in Tokyo, termed one of the greatest performances in Olympic history. Even more is expected this time in Paris. China has ruled diving for decades. But it's never pulled off the elusive gold sweep at the Games.

The People's Daily the official newspaper of the Communist Party termed this lapse "regrettable" in a recent article. How's that for pressure?"I hope that all of us can stand on the top of the podium," Tokyo gold medalist Quan Hongchan said in an interview on state-run television.

They might, and the record is already staggering. Starting with the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics where China claimed its first diving gold, it has won 47 of 64 gold medals. Add to that 23 silver and 10 bronze. If you start counting from the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Chinese have won 27 of 32 gold.

That's almost perfection,

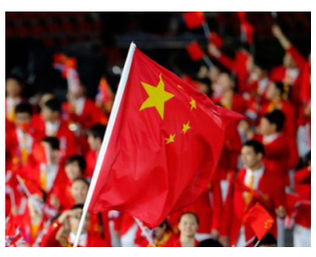


PHOTO: @PARIS2024

but someone always spoils the party like American David Boudia, Australian Matthew Mitcham, Briton Tom Daley, or Russian Ilya Zakharov.

The People's Daily urged the team to "launch an all-out bid this time for gold medals in all diving events."Quan was only 14 when she won gold three years ago on the 10-meter platform. Teammate Chen Yuxi, the gold medalist in synchro on the platform, was only 15. Both are back and probably in a class by themselves. For the men, Wang Zongyuan was the silver medalist on the 3-meter springboard in Tokyo behind teammate Xie Siyi and should be the favorite in Paris. —*PTI*